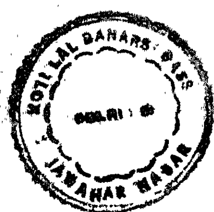
ESSAYS IN SANSKRIT CRITICISM



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SANSKRIT CRITICISM

By

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WITH A FOREWORD
by
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S. S. Wodeyar
Registrar

BY WAY OF FOREWORD

I will not be excessively apologetic for introducing a collection of erudite essays in a field unfamiliar to me—though I do feel, just a wee bit, like Ruth when she stood in tears amid the alien corn. Also, like her, sick for home.

It is no use pretending I am not sick for home—for those dim, and yet how splendid, halls hung with the cloudy trophies of a dead, immortal past, in which one's best youth was dandled. And yet, the only Sanskrit I ever knew was Latin; and something, perhaps, of the glory that was Greece, though without its language. But, as the Greek dramatist so happily said, the gods are to each other not unknown: there is a secret fellowship that spans time and space to make all the classics of the world one kin.

It is an advantage, surely, when you have to write a foreword, not to be too far, but also not too near. So one gets the right perspective. And perspective is all there is to it.

The fascination of Dr. Krishnamoorthy's essays published in this volume is that he is doing here something which, to my knowledge, has not yet been done, nor is being even attempted, in our country: an effort to understand Sanskrit critical concepts and attitudes against the background of Western thought. This naturally involves severe intellectual discipline and, above all, honesty. Much ignorance has been perpetuated by hit-or-miss renderings of Sanskrit terms into English. Translation is always, at its best, a betrayal; but this is especially so when creative literature is what is being translated. In the translation of

critical literature, the task cannot be so desperate, provided care is taken to get the fullest possible sense of the terms involved, in both languages. Oftener than not, a complete correspondence is not to be found, the parallel—if one may indulge in a geometrical solecism—is only tangential, and the result is a simultaneous obscuration of both terms.

Dr. Krishnamoorthy has tried to keep clear of this trap. His renderings are usually tentative, generally confining themselves to that aspect of the original which is most relevant to the context, neither shirking the issue nor claiming completeness. None knows better than he that, while etymology helps in rescuing a word from later accretions born of the vagaries of usage, still a word is not just its etymology, any more than the author of *King Lear* is just the son of Mary Arden and John Shakespeare.

The originality of these essays lies in that most of them could have only been written by a man who knows a great deal more than Sanskrit; one who can switch fluently from one literature to another; one who can illuminate knotty points in Sanskrit criticism by intelligent reference to English critics, even the very modern, like Eliot and Richards.

As a lover of Sanskrit, but especially of that branch of its critical literature which is concerned with Poetics, Dr. Krishnamoorthy is particularly anxious to save our classics from the thousand-and-one commentaries that overlay and overweigh them. To isolate, and affirm, beauty as a value, to resolve the entire question of criticism into one of good taste versus bad taste, and do it, not by fond, arbitrary fancy, but with the aid of authority intelligently

and sympathetically interpreted, is a heroic effort to resurrect a buried city; to make us see, as the author suggests in his Introduction, the wood in the trees. And few scholars have, to my knowledge, better qualifications for this task than Dr. Krishnamoorthy. Like the work of his own favourite critic, Ānandavardhana, these essays constitute, not a commentary, but a discovery.

DHARWAR,
1-1-1964

Armando Menezes

PREFATORY NOTE

The essays here collected deal mostly with several aspects of ancient Indian critical theory and practice. The collection might appear uneven since they have been written over a period of several years; many of them have appeared in different periodicals. What brings them together into something like a unity is, I hope, their common concern with interpretation of Indian literary ideas. They return again and again to certain common concepts of critical judgment. Nearly all of them treat of Sanskrit poetry and drama in some aspect or other. Since the study of poetry is a single pursuit, I hope that they may be found to have some connection with each other and to display something of a point of view on matters in which most lovers of poetry are interested.

In modern discussions of critical theory, the Sanskrit theorists are, more often than not, ignored; and it is hoped that these essays may show how their ideas do not merit neglect even today.

The word 'criticism' in the title is used broadly to include principles of literary theory and is not used in the narrow sense of practical criticism. Sanskrit criticism believes in poetic values which can be considered in their own right, and their discussions involve something more than an account of personal likes and dislikes. It has been my aim to make my account of these as much of interest to the general reader as to the specialist.

I should express my thanks to the Editors of *The Aryan Path*, *The Indian Historical Quarterly*, *The Poona Orientalist*,

and the *Karnatak University Journal* for the courtesy of permission to reprint the essays first published by them. I am grateful to Professor Armando Menezes for adding to the value of this book by contributing his Foreward. I am extremely obliged to Dr. D.C. Pavate, Vice-Chancellor of the Karnatak University, for encouraging me by permitting this work to be released as a University publication. My thanks are also due to Sri C.S. Kanavi, Director of Publications, and his courteous staff for assistance in seeing the book through the Press.

KARNATAK UNIVERSITY
DHARWAR
January 4, 1964.

K. Krishnamoorthy

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I

INTRODUCTION

Most modern accounts of ancient Indian poetry and poetic theory lay emphasis on the stereotyped nature of its critical rules and canons, with their unending divisions and subdivisions. Historical surveys of the categories of Sanskrit poetics, more often than not, miss the wood for the trees. It would appear as though the ancient Indian writers had an obsession for labels and classifications, whether of figurative turns or character types, of literary *genres* or poetic excellences. On fundamental issues like the nature and function of poetry, its ways and means, it would seem we are given some ready-made catchwords or *sūtras* which are liable to be interpreted far too mechanically. Even granting that this view is all right as far as it goes, some might feel that it does not go far enough. For the extant treatises on the subject are all posterior to the richly creative period of Sanskrit literature, which saw the rise of master-poets like Vālmīki and Kālidāsa, Aśvaghoṣa and Bhāravi; and they are couched in a style avowedly aphoristic, allowing no room for any general discussion of principles. But this cannot be taken as sufficient to warrant the conclusion that Indians were devoid of doctrines and points of view which are relevant for all time in criticism. The achievemeet of a Vālmıki or a Kālidāsa cannot be explained solely in terms of the later rules, however detailed; their works point to a body of sound literary and critical principles shared by poets and critics alike in their time. These general critical ideas have to be gathered from stray hints dropped by the poets themselves in their works, and from the hints supplied by

unconventional writers like Rājaśekhara, author of the interesting *Kāvyamīmāṁsā* (c. 900 A.D.)

Rājaśekhara, for instance, tells us how there were reputed literary critics in important cities like Ujjayinī and Pāṭalīputra, and how they adjudged the merits of poets like Kālidāsa, Bhartṛ-meṇṭha and Bhāravi. How could they have discharged their function satisfactorily unless they were sure of the grounds of criticism? It is difficult for us to conceive that they took a verse at random from any given work and pronounced judgement on the author's relative merits solely on grounds of technical skill. If we are to believe Rājaśekhara, they seem to have had a very sharp critical acumen, in so far as they had a well-defined scale of assessment to measure not only poetic success but also poetic failure, a scale admitting of more than a dozen precise categories of poets—good, bad and indifferent—the highest being that of 'Kavirāja'.

That well-organised critical opinion was an established fact in the time of Kālidāsa is clearly evidenced by the modest tone adopted by him in the prefaces to some of his poems and plays. If he calls himself a dullwit aspiring after poetic fame *(mandaḥ kaviyaśaḥprārthī)* in his *Raghuvaṁśa,* he openly states in the prologue to his best play that he would be loth to take pride in his dramatic skill until the learned critics were satisfied with the performance of his play; and ends with the note: "Let the words of the learned flourish!" *(sarasvatī śrutamahatāṁ mahīyatāṁ)*.

Who are these 'learned' ones that Kālidāsa cannot forget whenever he starts or closes one of his works? All too easily, one might take them to be identical with the pandits at the Court, learned in the several disciplines of thought in general and in the rules of rhetoric in particular.

But it can only be a prejudiced view. That Kālidāsa was addressing his works to a select band of 'experts' at the court is a modern canard. If it were true to any extent, the modest poet would not have mustered his courage to tell them to their faces that they would be a pack of fools if they underrated him, in comparison with the older playwrights, simply because he was new. Why should he imagine that the 'experts' had to be taught the first lesson in critical judgement, that everything old need not be gold, or *vice versa?* Besides, he adds in the same breath that the theatre provides uniform entertainment to an audience whose tastes are myriad. We might, therefore, infer that enlightened critical opinion of literary critics was a factor which even Kālidāsa could not ignore; and that he shows due deference to the good critics, while having a dig at the bad ones. There is no reason to assume that critics were confined to royal courts. For aught we know Kālidāsa might have addressed critics all over India.

Nor is Kālidāsa a stray instance of this phenomenon. Extolling good taste and running down bad taste became almost the main theme of the conventional prefaces of every Sanskrit writer, from Bāṇa onwards. Though the remarks offered by the poets themselves on this question may be dismissed as meagre and insufficient to build up anything like a structure of the broad critical principles prevalent in India, we cannot ignore the fundamental fact that the critics with taste alone were honoured and looked upon as proper judges of poetry; not scholars or grammarians. Rules of technique were there, of course, for the guidance of poets and critics alike. But these never meant underrating of genius in the poet or of taste in the critic. Even the 'rules', often openly, did concede this first premiss.

We have been labouring at some length what is a commonplace today, because one of the major functions of criticism is to highlight the workings of genius on the one hand and of taste on the other. They have an affinity with each other inasmuch as they do not admit of a scientific analysis and are to some extent a mystery. They are also alike in their concern for aesthetic value. If genius creates beauty, taste recognises it; it is a full circle. The Indians would go to the extent of affirming the essential identity of genius and taste, because of identity in aesthetic experience. The difference is only in respect of function: one is creative, the other is not; that is all.

What is the value of aesthetic experience? Why should the poet create and the critic appreciate? In ancient India, these questions did not appear to require any special pleading or elaborate discussion, because the poet's status was traditionally the most honoured in Indian life. Unlike any other country in the ancient world, India alone had a heritage of hoary poetry, viz., the *Veda,* which had come to be looked upon as infallible scripture in guiding man's life here and hereafter. The later lawbooks, like that of Manu, which derived their authority from these, were also poetic in their own way. And the vast body of epic literature, too, was at once secular poetry and sacred ethics and philosophy. Even in classical times, poetry was expected to present an integrated unity of the good, the true and the beautiful, though the last came to receive a more pointed attention. Even the highest kings and philosophers aspired after poetic glory as the only thing immortal in a mortal world. Against this background, one need not wonder at the claims made on behalf of poetry by the ancient Indian theorists. Their claim that,

through poetry, all the known values of life can be realised, and delectably at that, is not an idle apology or a wild exaggeration when applied to the best and greatest poems of antiquity. A poem, say, the Rāmāyaṇa, is ranked great not merely because of its aesthetic value, but also because of its ethical and religious or spiritual value. So the very name for the epic *genre* which came to be devised by the theorists was *'mahākāvya'* (great poem). Similarly 'great' plays *(nāṭaka)* in India were required to be based on epic themes.

Only when a play or a poem makes no pretence to 'greatness', are aesthetic criteria alone enough to assess its value. Indian criticism is not prepared to recognise a poem as 'great' solely on aesthetic grounds if it is ethically hollow, if its philosophy of life is not profound, if its extent is not vast. Such a work is recognised as precious poetry *(muktaka)* but only under the head of 'light' literature *(laghu-kāvya)*. This is the region of lyrics and epigrams, comedies and burlesques. The epic themes cover the whole of the human situation in all its variety, and the epic characters are semi-divine in stature. The epic imagination endows life and significance even to inanimate nature, and the treatment is throughout ideal. The poetic manner or vein *(varṇanā)* is just as important as the poetic matter. We step into a world altogether different from the world of stark reality, and yet appealing to our hearts as more real than reality. The heart accepts the world of art which our reason might reject. The Indian mind, with its love of the mystic, has always given to poetic or imaginative truth a place higher than scientific truth. Both the mystic philosopher and the epic poet are 'seers' *(ṛṣi)*; they see deeper into the life of things, and in

this they are alike. The difference lies only in the methods adopted by them to embody their vision. While the philosopher chooses the method of logical analysis and of abstract speculation, the poet prefers the synthetic method of concretising the abstract. It is only in this ideal sense that we can fully appreciate the traditional equation of the poet and the seer *(nānṛṣiḥ kavirityuktaṁ)*. The court-poets who revelled in wordy conceits to please their kings do not merit any comparison with the *mahā-kavi*-s who were *ṛṣi*-s. They were only practitioners of the poetic trade, and not at all, in the true sense of the word, poets.

The Indian explanation of the vital principle of unity underlying 'great' poems and plays is the much misunderstood theory of 'rasa'. It has something to do with mental states and emotions, but is not, as often made out, identical with them. The theory is not merely psychological; it embodies the Indian philosophy of aesthetics. Harmony or propriety *(aucitya)* is of its very essence, and it should be interpreted as a principle of harmony between various factors involved in a literary work. It is not a ready-made scheme which can be indiscriminately applied to every work claiming to be poetry. The popular practice of regarding every love-song as an instance of *Śṛṅgāra-rasa*, and every limerick as an instance of *hāsya-rasa* is jejune.

It is only after making sure that, in a given work, there is aesthetic appeal or *rasa* that one can think of particularising it as this or that. Anyway, it must be realised that the principle of *rasa* has different applications in the different literary forms. In the drama, where its demand is uppermost, it becomes the sole criterion for the depiction of characters and for the development of plot. The principles of unity of action and consistency of

character derive directly from the principle of *rasa*. In the epic, because of its vast dimensions, these principles get diluted, but do not disappear. They only become adjusted to the claims of variety in character and incident. This is true, by and large, of the prose romances also. In the lyric, where there is no variety and no plot or character-development, the self-same principle of *rasa* assumes a new form of harmony between mental states and moods through the central core of a dominant emotion underlying them all. It also embraces the assessment of the contribution made to the *rasa* by figures of speech and qualities of style. The older theorists were wont to confine the principle of *rasa* to drama and the lyric; hence it could only be one of the several aspects of beauty *(alaṅkāra)* in a full-fledged epic. But the new critics headed by Ānandavardhana brilliantly pleaded for an unrestricted application of it to great epics also, on the ground that it was the sole aesthetic principle. This is a principle which pinpoints the poet's vision of, and emphasis upon, a dominant quality pervading the human universe, and which gives to the work of great poets that unique universality, tantamount to a 'criticism of life'.

The Indian *rasa*-theorists speak of this as *sādhāraṇīkaraṇa;* and it is of the very essence of *rasa*. The poet's raw emotion, *qua* emotion, has no importance in poetry. It is only when it is impersonalised and universalised by the impact of the poet's genius that we have *rasa*. It is the unique *pratibhā* (intuition) of the poet which accomplishes the miracle of giving to the particular the weight and force of the universal. We might conclude that *rasa,* as understood by the Indians, stands not only for the aesthetic value of emotions, but also for their universal significance

which is the *sine qua non* of literature. So interpreted, highly sensuous descriptions of amours will cease to be instances of *śṛṅgāra-rasa* in literature; spectacular and sensational melodrama will not provide instances of dramatic *vīra-rasa;* they will be only caricatures of the true *rasa*, though medieval Indian theorists like Rudrabhaṭṭa and Bhānudatta laboured under this misunderstanding. Among writers of Sanskrit poetics too, we have to distinguish, then, between pedants and connoisseurs, *śāstrins* and *sahṛdayas*, the best representative of the latter being Ānandavardhana with his sound principle of *rasa-dhvani*. It was he that worked out in full the practical implications of the aesthetic principle of *rasa* in every literary *genre*, and who reinterpreted all the earlier categories of poetics in the light of this vital principle. It was left to his able commentator, Abhinavagupta, to give *rasa* a strong metaphysical foundation. But for him, aesthetic experience *(rasa)* could not have claimed an independent and equal status with the other accepted values of truth and goodness. After him, artists could say that the contemplation of the beautiful *(rasa)* was as much a stepping stone to the *summum bonum* *(mokṣa)* as that of the good *(dharma)* and the true *(tattva-jñāna)*. A full consideration of the general principle of *rasa* will remove the charge that the Indians neglected aesthetics in their fondness for ethics and metaphysical speculation. They achieved a synthetic harmony between the three fields, unknown in the history of other countries. All their canons of propriety and decorum follow from their aesthetic principle of *rasa;* all their categories of rhetoric, stylistic devices and figurative turns hinge upon this vital principle. Hence it is that the Indians talk of *rasa* as the very 'soul' (*ātman*)

of poetry. The tendency of studying the other concepts in isolation from *rasa* is both mistaken and misleading.

As regards the structure of poetry, Indian thinkers, both old and new, are agreed on an organic view. They strive to stress the *sāhitya* or organic unity between content (*artha*) and form (*śabda*) and would frown upon their dichotomy. The very name of criticism in Sanskrit is *sāhitya-śāstra* ('a study of the unity of content and form') or *alaṅkāra-śāstra* ('a study of beauty in literature'). With these facts before us, we cannot make the sweeping generalisation that the Sanskrit writers are proficient only in hair-splitting distinctions and tedious tabulations of 'ornaments' and 'qualities' of poetry, and that they are deficient in the synthetic outlook. It becomes the duty of the modern interpreter to take pains to bring out the underlying logic of the rules, whatever their differences in detail. It might be very true that in a decadent age, in the hands of pedants, the rules might have degenerated into mechanical conventions and allowed the unimaginative critic to judge by a ready-made yardstick. Nonetheless, the essential soundness of the philosophy behind the rules need not be impugned.

We have observed that the poets enjoyed a high social reputation in India. They were almost ranked as prophets; royal honours were showered on them. The socially respected ideas of morality and religion, besides-intellectual attainments of a high order, were naturally expected of great poets along with their primary capacity to give aesthetic delight. That is why, in the traditional requirements of a poet, though the first place is reserved for intuition, wide learning and a sound philosophy are also included as essential factors. Untiring practice of the tools

of the trade under a competent guide is the third requirement laid down for ensuring the best results. The need for such a training must have been acutely present in a classical language like Sanskrit, with its complicated grammar, many-sided vocabulary, countless metres, and numerous figures of speech. We have no reason to conclude that every student was schooled in poetic composition as an essential part of his education, irrespective of his taste. In fact, the primacy of intuition stressed by the theorists gives the lie to any such conclusion.

Sanskrit poets and critics are fond of comparing the world of poetic creation with the universe of God's creation. In the comparison, it is the world of poetry that strikes as superior. The poet is a free creator, freer even than God; for God, according to Indian thought, is conditioned by the *karma* of the souls to be created. The world of God allows room for the ugly as well as the beautiful, for pain as well as joy. Not so the poet's world. It is one of unmixed beauty and unalloyed joy. An anonymous Prakrit poet makes Sarasvatī, the goddess of poetry, proud of her new residence in the young poet's tongue in preference to that of her old husband, Brahma. Another poet waxes eloquent over the boundless sweep of the poet's imagination that can embrace all the fourteen worlds. In such a view, which makes the poetic world not an analogue or parallel of God's creation, but one more perfect and autonomous, it is a homely maxim that poets are exempt from restraint (*niraṅkuśāḥ kavayaḥ*). The checks and restraints detailed by the theorists could in no wise limit the free play of the poet's imagination; they were only calculated to direct his attention to the incidental pitfalls involved in offence to grammar or prosody, decorum or scholarship. The typical

Sanskrit theorist, exacting purist as he was, was not one without his share of aesthetic sensibility. He would be ready to ignore even palpable lapses and downright errors in master-poets, provided their power was impressively uniform. This is illustrated in the well-known Sanskrit provision for poetic licence (*mahākavi-prayoga*).[1] There is also the idea of impermanent 'faults' (*anityadoṣa*), i.e., 'faults' which become positive graces in exceptional circumstances involving a sudden outburst of emotion. All this goes to prove that the Indian critics, believing as they did in a rational theory of poetry, did not hold poetry itself to be entirely rational.

What, precisely, is the Indian idea of artistic beauty? The question is more easily raised than answered, because Indian theorists do not pose the question at all in this particular way. There are different levels of beauty—beauty in the material handled, beauty in the manner of handling it, beauty in nature, and beauty imagined. The Indian thinkers are concerned, in their classifications of subjects fit for poetic treatment, styles, qualities and figures of speech, only with the first two which are, by implication, supposed to explain beauty. This analysis of technique down to the utmost detail is a singular achievement of the ancients,

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[1] *Cf.* Some lucky Licence answer to the full
Th' intent propos'd, that Licence is a rule,
Thus Pagasus, a nearer way to take,
May boldly deviate from the common track;
Great wits sometimes may gloriously offend
And rise to faults true Critics dare not mend;
From vulgar bounds with brave disorder part,
And snatch a grace beyond the reach of art, ...

— Alexander Pope, *Essay on Criticism*, ll. 146-155.

though it certainly makes difficult reading today. Most of the theorists were themselves poets of a high order, and it is their speciality that they have given concrete illustrations of every device and grace defined by them, with examples of their own composition. Yet, it is too much to believe that any 'free' and inspired poet would consciously follow these rules while writing a poem. The truth seems to be that, both in content and form, a poet did achieve beauty which could be intellectually analysed only after the composition was completed. The rules are like the skeletons of such analyses. They relate primarily to technique and should not be confused with the broad question at issue, viz., 'what is beauty?'. But something like an answer to this question is indicated in connection with the principle of *rasa;* for, the subjects deemed fit for poetic treatment are detailed primarily from this angle. The subjects not only include pleasant ones, like victory and revelry, but also painful ones, like bereavement. Among the *rasas* themselves, we have mutually opposed ones, like Śṛṅgāra (the erotic) and Śānta (the tranquil), Hāsya (the comic) and Karuṇa (the pathetic), Vīra (the heroic) and Bhayānaka (the frightful), Adbhuta (the wonderful) and Bībhatsa (the revolting). This open acceptance of the painful as well as the pleasurable within the ambit of the beautiful, is a measure of the depth of Indian thought on this question. The beauty even of ugliness is a *rasa,—bībhatsa.* The beauty of passive 'calm', too, is a *rasa,—śānta.* In such a comprehensive theory of beauty, we catch glimpses of the unique power of poetry which can, when handled by genius, transform anything and everything to beauty. Artistic beauty, according to Indian theory, is something different, not only in degree but in kind, from natural beauty and

from the human beauty of form. Poetry can distil aesthetic joy from the most unexpected things in the natural world and in the world of human relations. Nay more, it can create an altogether new world of beauty undreamt of by ordinary men. This is the world of myths and metaphors, fancies and symbols. Though by ordinary standards they are untrue, they possess an aesthetic value or truth.

Apart from this general idea of beauty, we have, in the works of Sanskrit master-poets, hints of random attempts at explaining the nature of beauty. Talking of feminine beauty, Kālidāsa tells us that the Creator must have assembled the best parts of the different things of beauty in the universe, to create Pārvatī. This theory of selection from nature as the secret of constructive beauty is again seen in Kālidāsa's description of Urvaśī. He observes that such an old fogey as Brahma, deadened to aesthetic sensibility and drooling out the sacred texts, could never be credited with such a beautiful creation as Urvaśī; perhaps some one else, more aesthetically-minded, the Moon or Cupid or Spring, was the real creator! Similar ideas are found in his account of the love-lorn heroine in his Meghadūta, and we would not be wrong in concluding that artistic beauty, as Kālidāsa conceives it, consists of an intelligent selection by the artist of beautiful details from several objects and their artistic re-arrangement.

Traces of a similar idea can be detected in the Sanskrit works on rhetoric. Words described by grammar and meanings noted in the dictionary are not aesthetic as such; the poet shows his aesthetic sensibility, first, in his selection of words and meanings, and next, in the re-arrangement of these with an eye to their aesthetic value. He is guided by the principles of euphony and assonance in his devices of

rhyme and alliteration. To invest his idea with a striking quality and a fresh charm, he will utilize the various figures based on the principles of metaphor, comparison, contrast, analogy, irony, hyperbole, symmetrical order, etc. His sense of rhythm is evidenced in his selection of metrical patterns. If we remember that the act of poetic creation is more intuitional than intellectual, we cannot fall into the error of regarding the figures and measures as external embellishments. They can be rightly looked upon as aspects of organic form. The Indian theorists declare that the unifying principle underlying all this technique is the principle of *atiśaya* or 'idealisation'. The poet deliberately departs from the normal and the natural; he unmakes and re-makes the given reality, he fancies and idealises—all to achieve the goal of creating beauty out of human experience.

Poetry has both a logic and a magic about it. The logic of poetry (*kāvyanyāya*) is the very reversal of the normal logic; it is called *alaṅkāra*. Its magic is felt by all, and yet it baffles analysis; it is called *rasa*. Thus, *alaṅkāra* and *rasa* are the two magnetic poles in Sanskrit criticism, which appear opposed to each other at first sight and confuse even specialists, since both are given simultaneously in the Indian explanations of poetic beauty. In point of fact, they are complementary, and not contradictory, concepts. When the poetic art is viewed from the artist's angle, we get *alaṅkāra* as the aesthetic principle. But that is not enough. There is the critic's response, which is not art, but only experience of art. From the angle of the reader's experience of beauty, we have the principle of *rasa*. One is the means, the other is the end. One answers the question 'how?', the other answers the question 'why?'. But the two are really bound up with each other so inti-

mately that one cannot dissociate them in criticism. Yet, the principle of *rasa* is more comprehensive in its range and can explain the poet's experience better than the principle of *alaṅkāra*.

We can rightly ask at this stage: 'If *rasa* is primarily the aesthetic experience of the cultivated critic, what is the nature of the poet's experience itself? Is it also *rasa?*' It is here that we begin to feel the tyranny of words. The Sanskrit theorist would answer that in a sense it is, and in a sense it is not. *Rasa* is nothing more than aesthetic joy; hence the creative poet must perforce be credited with it. 'If a pot is not full, it cannot overflow' (*yāvat pūrṇo na caitena tāvannaiva vamatyamuṁ*). If this is not conceded, the felt experience of the critic himself would go unexplained. *Rasa* is said to transcend the limits of time and space and to be as pure and infinite as the joy of the Lord Creator himself. In this sense, the creative urge or inspiration itself can be regarded as *rasa*. It is its very nature to command the services of *alaṅkāra* without any special intellectual straining; and it lasts as long as the mood of creativity lasts. But the poet himself might appreciate his own work at a later stage after creating it. This is also *rasa*, but in another sense. We might distinguish the two as joy of creation and joy of appreciation; but there is only one word *rasa* in Sanskrit for, both. The first is a joy wholly imaginative and synthetic while the second has also room for the intellectual and analytical faculties. The problem becomes trickier when we are faced with the differing testimonies of both poets and critics regarding their experience. There are poets who say that creation for them is a relief from pain. There are connoisseurs who aver that the best music or poetry induces an experience of sorrow in them. Kālidāsa himself has

recorded in his masterpiece, the effect of a love-song on the hero, who was apparently unperturbed and cheerful until he heard the sweet song. The love-song had suddenly made him moody.[2] The Indian explanation, also hinted at by Kālidāsa himself, is first, that it is abnormal and secondly, that it is due to revived memories of a deeply buried past, extending into past births. The theory of *rasa* provides for such exceptions by stating that the ideal experience of *rasa* is one which completely disallows any intrusion from one's personal life, whether one be poet or critic. But in actual practice, the intrusions are perhaps unavoidable, and hence the proverbial variations in critical judgement. The acid test of beauty proposed by another Sanskrit poet is 'ever-new winsomeness' (*kṣaṇe kṣaṇe yannavatāmupaiti/tadeva rūpam ramaṇīyatāyāḥ/*)[3] Unfading charm, or the abiding value of poetry, can be adequately explained only in terms of *rasa*, or impersonal, disinterested, aesthetic joy.

Finally, a word about the precise relation between poetic vision and *rasa*. The poetic world, as we have seen, is not a copy of the world of reality, but a parallel world of beauty answering only to the laws of imagination. To succeed, it must present us with a complex and yet a whole experience. Bits of experience, however skilfully presented, cannot be aesthetically satisfying. The secret of the whole literary process lies in the unfathomed depth of the human personality; and Sanskrit critics try to unravel the secret in their own way. Just as the Vedānta philosophers indicate

[2] *Cf.* 'I am never merry when I hear sweet music'—Jessica.
—Shakespeare, *Merchant of Venice,* V. I. 70.

[3] *Cf.* 'Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale Her infinite variety'.
—Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, i.3.57.

the Absolute in a negative way, indicating successively what it is not (*neti, neti*), so do *rasa*-theorists indicate the nature of *rasa* by excluding many things from the realm of poetry. In our daily parlance, we are familiar with words and their meanings. We are aware of referential or denotative meanings, figurative meanings, connotative meanings with emotional overtones, contextual meanings and even structural meanings of whole sentences. All these meanings are more or less definite or precise, the words and sentences serving as precise signs or symbols to communicate the intended meanings. Poetry has room for all this, but is essentially something plus; and that is *rasa*.

In abstract thinking, as in mathematics, we are familiar with the phenomenon of signs remaining almost unrecognised as signs, and serving as promoters of ideas and relations between ideas. Thinking is not so much referential as relation-finding. If we can also call complex thought 'meaning', such meaning is the direct result, not of word-signs and symbols, but of the meanings of the word-signs. This shows how, like words, ideas or meanings too can become symbols of further meaning. In poetry, too, we have a similar phenomenon, though, unlike mathematics, poetry deals with concrete and emotive symbols. Here also, the referential and other familiar meanings of words and symbols cease to act as ends in themselves; they in their turn become means for further ideas and meanings. The first meaning itself becomes the symbol for a second meaning, the second for a third. In this associative series of meanings, all are necessary, but only as subserving the last, of which alone the critic is sure. But the magic of poetry is such that the last meaning strikes us as though it were as direct as the first itself. And all the partakers in

the series of meanings are charged with feeling. Yet, none of them, except the last, are exclusively important, and it is this alone which is truly *rasa*. Sensuous images, associative thoughts, emotional overtones, turns of expression—all contribute in an unanalysable way to the totality of the final, aesthetic, experience. A trained reader can pass unhindered, from the mere words to this final experience at one stroke as it were. This whole process is well brought home to us in the theory of *dhvani,* or 'suggestion', propounded by Ānandavardhana. 'Suggestion' is the name given by him to the peculiar power or potency inhering in all the elements constituting poetry. Criticism, in his hands, becomes, not a commentary, but a discovery. The theory proves how poetry is much more than a re-arrangement of materials already given. Corresponding to the poet's joy of creation, we have in this theory, the critic's joy of discovery. It also brings out how the poet's vision must take a full view of human life, at its most significant level, before it can succeed in the task of creation.

If such is the ultimate nature of *rasa,* we can now see how the chief passions of men provide the foundation for their characters and govern their lives. Such passions as love and heroism, in their variety and complexity, will serve as proper themes or subjects for literary artists. In Sanskrit, the word *rasa* is also used in a secondary sense, to denote these poetic themes. Theorists are aware that this is a loose usage, and do not forget to add that, technically, emotions as themes of a literary work are only *sthāyibhāvas* (enduring emotions) and not *rasas*. Much of the confusion among Sanskrit writers of a later date is due to their neglect of this vital distinction. According to the theory of *dhvani,* all emotive compositions are not poetry; only

such emotive compositions can become poetry as result in unmistakable *rasa;* and *rasa* has its own laws of propriety.

In such a scheme, though the ideal poetry is one culminating in *rasa,* actual poems may often fall short of that high standard and yet be counted as successful poems. This is poetry of the second order, and its examples invariably indicate that the poet's talent has outrun his genius. Here we have the subordination of suggested meaning to the brilliant images of the denotative. There may be yet others without any genius whatever, like the authors of intellectual saws and puzzles. They are devoid of poetry because they are devoid of *rasa.*

In this 'Introduction', we have endeavoured to sketch in broad outline some of the general critical issues which engaged the attention of ancient Indian poets and critics. We feel that some of their ideas merit consideration even today. The following chapters attempt to examine a few of them in greater detail.

II

SANSKRIT CRITICISM AND ALAṄKARA (POETIC IMAGERY)

"samaṣṭiḥ sarvaśāstrāṇāṁ
sāhityamiti gīyate"

['Criticism is the sum of all sciences'

I

Religion, poetry and philosophy have ever been the most cherished pursuits of Indians; and we have some of the richest contributions of the Indian mind in these fields. The analytical subtlety of Indian thinkers is no less remarkable than their synthetic vision. As far back as the beginning of the Christian era, Indian thinkers had systematised their study not only of religious literature but also of the then known sciences and the arts. Literary studies were reared on the triple groundwork of Grammar, Metrics and Criticism.[1] The Sanskrit name for criticism is either *sāhitya*-[2] or *alaṅkāra- śāstra.* While the word *sāhitya* (lit. 'togetherness') emphasises the indissoluble unity of form and content in literature, the word *alaṅkāra* (beauty) indicates the subject of enquiry. It is equally significant that in the opinion of Sanskrit thinkers, criticism is entitled to

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[1] *padavidyāmadhicchandovicitiṁ vāgalaṅkṛtiṁ*
trayīṁ samuditāmetāṁ tadvido vāṅmayaṁ viduḥ.
— Jinasena, *Mahāpurāṇa*, XVI. 111.

[2] In Sanskrit, the word *sāhitya*, like *sāhitya-śāstra*, meant originally only criticism; it came to mean literature at a very late stage.

be regarded as a systematised body of knowledge. They are aware that while literature is primarily an act of creative genius, criticism involves an intellectual or scientific analysis besides literary taste in the critic.[3] That a cultivated taste is indeed the *sine qua non* of a literary critic is brought out by naming him a *sahṛdaya* (lit. 'one akin to the poet in sensibility') or *rasika* (lit. 'one alive to the essence of poetry').

The claims of criticism for the status of a science have never been disputed in India, though the value of literature itself has been sometimes called into question by orthodox theologians. The critical theorists, therefore, make it a point to vindicate poetry by answering the charges made against it and declaring that in this world of ours wherein everything is liable to decay, poetry is the only source of imperishable fame to the poet and the only means of aesthetic delight, coupled with moral and spiritual enlightenment, to the reader. But what about the critic himself who stands midway between the poet and the reader? The theorists do not raise this question at all because the status of acting as guides to generations of honoured poets required by no means any further justification on their part.

Nonetheless, the question is most relevant today; and we have to consider whether criticism can ever attain scientific exactitude. It is a commonplace of criticism that no two critics agree in their judgment of a literary work.

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[3] *dve vartmanī girāṁ devyāḥ*
śāstraṁ ca kavikarma ca;
prajñopajñyaṁ tayorādyaṁ
pratibhodbhavamantimaṁ.
(quoted by Bhaṭṭa Gopāla in his commentary on the *Kāvya-prakāśa.*)

Yet, underneath all their differences, whether there is or is not significant agreement on the fundamentals of literature, is the question at issue; and Indian writers on Poetics presume that there is, and turn to investigate the broad principles of beauty in literature. Their method is one of formal definition, classification and illustration, using as few words as possible. Whatever the merits of this cryptic *sūtra* style, it presents no small difficulty to the modern reader in understanding aright the aesthetic principles underlying the laconic formulae of the Indian theorists. One is tempted to dismiss them as idle brainwork indicating nothing more than the Indian flair for hairsplitting distinctions; yet one might discover a whole philosophy of beauty if one pauses to understand them fairly and fully. One might then realise that the business of Indian theorists was to classify only in order to clarify.

II

The starting point for the Indian theory of beauty lies in the distinction of literary *genres*. Apart from the extrinsic division of literature into prose and poetry, the very first writer, Bhāmaha, observes that from the stand-point of subject-matter, literature is divisible into four broad types[4]:—

1. Accounts of legendary gods and heroes,
2. Works of fiction,
3. Works based on the arts,
4. Works based on the sciences.

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[4] *vṛttadevādicaritaṁ cotpādyavastu ca ;*
kalāśāstrāśrayaṁ ceti caturdhā bhidyate punaḥ.
— *Kāvyālaṅkāra*, I. 17.

He proceeds to add that, from the standpoint of presentation, literature may be divided into five *genres*[5] :—

1. Epic, extending to several cantos,
2. Drama, meant for the stage,
3. Prose where the hero recounts his own adventure,
4. Romantic tale in prose,
5. Independent quatrains.

It will be readily seen that though theoretically the two divisions are mutually inclusive, the last two categories of the first division can come mostly under the last *genre* under the second; and, strictly speaking, these fall outside the pale of literature proper. They have been mentioned only to indicate the unique presence of literary grace even in works on the arts and the sciences in the Sanskrit language, a grace due to conscious artistry. That apart, we are left with the following main heads under which all literature is subsumed :—

1. Epic, legendary or heroic,
2. Epic, literary or romantic,
3. Drama, legendary or heroic,
4. Drama, romantic, etc.,[6]
5. Prose chronicle where the hero recounts his own adventures,
6. Romantic tale in prose,
7. Lyric quatrains, single or in small units.

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[5] *sargabandho' bhineyārthaṁ*
tathaivākhyāyikākathe ;
anibaddhaṁ ca kāvyādi
tatpunaḥ pañcadhocyate. – Ibid., I. 18.

[6] For the other forms of drama, comic, farcical, etc., the reader is referred by Bhāmaha to the famous classification of Bharata involving ten major types. Cf. Ibid. I. 24.

Though it appears at first sight that the lyric is given but a secondary importance in this scheme, it should be remembered that all these types of epic, dramatic and prose works allow room for both prose and verse; and in the drama especially, lyric measures have an integral function. We have been considering this apparently mechanical division at some length, because it embodies a principle most basic to Sanskrit poetics. All the *genres* are concerned only with the lives of 'heroes' and 'heroines', low characters serving only as foils. The supernatural has free play everywhere except in the few types of social comedy and farce. Love and heroism become the two predominant emotions in every work, others like the pathetic, the comic and the furious, serving only to set the former in bolder relief. Realism is almost shut out from every *genre* and the world of literature is deliberately made an imaginative world of mystery, romance, and beauty. Just as man is idealised, so too is nature humanised; and the poet strains to visualise the supernatural participation of nature in the affairs of 'heroes'. The poetic world is kept blissfully aloof from the cares and worries that beset the world of fact. Virtue (*dharma*) invariably triumphs over villainy in the long run. All these restrictions of the ancient theorists appear to us today as so many artificial canons which clipped the soaring wings of poetic genius, and hastened the decadence of Sanskrit poetry. While it is true that this prevented poetry from gaining in breadth, it is also equally true that it contributed to its growing in depth; it gave a fillip to the mythopoeic imagination of the poet; and this is not often realised. It is a unique phenomenon in world literature comparable only to the influence of Pāṇini's rigid grammar on the

Sanskrit language. If the grammar arrested the natural growth of the language, it also saved it from 'linguistic decay' and helped its preservation in its pristine purity, so that in respect of clarity, after a lapse of even two thousand years, the Sanskrit language remains unique and unparalleled. If Sanskrit poets failed to add new dimensions to their art, they uniquely succeeded in perfecting the poetic technique to its highest water-mark in the history of world poetry.

The first principles formulated by Sanskrit theorists on the art of literature deserve, therefore, careful attention even today. These principles have stood the test of time not only in Sanskrit, but also in the numerous vernacular literatures that came within the orbit of the cultural influence of Sanskrit. Life actually lived by the common people and life as portrayed in Sanskrit literature are, no doubt, two different things; but there is no unbridged gulf between them; for, imaginative sympathy or 'willing suspension of disbelief' is of the very essence of the enjoyment of literature; and it serves as a bridge between the two. One who is not experienced in ordinary life is not, in theory, qualified to be a critic of taste. The reader's taste, fashioned by life, is refined by literature; and, in its turn, helps him to live his normal life, in a refined way, according to Indian theory. That society can be refined or reformed by presenting exclusively the seamy side of life, is a notion foreign to Indian poetic theory. They think that the role of real life cannot be anything other than secondary in poetry.

III

From the material of literature, we may now turn to its method or technique. In fact, the technique of Sanskrit poets directly derives from their material on the one hand,

and the standards fixed by grammar, prosody, etc., on the other. The one consideration central to Sanskrit criticism is impeccability. The slightest error, grammatical or logical, factual or metrical, is censured in the strongest terms even in the work of a master poet, when it is smacks of his ignorance (*avyutpatti*) and not of deliberate choice occasioned by literary considerations like emotional stress. In fact, we have long lists of other literary 'flaws' (*doṣas*) that jar on the ear or are repulsive to good taste.

As on the absence of palpable defects, so does Sanskrit theory insist on the presence of positive excellences (*guṇas*) in all the recognisable elements of a composition. These excellences can be felt only by a trained critic. 'Sweetness', 'brilliance' and 'lucidity' are the universally accepted excellences, the first two being exclusive of each other, while the third is contributory to both of them. The indivisible unity (*sāhitya*) of form and matter in literature is again realised in grasping the nature of the excellences. A passage will be 'sweet' as much on account of its matter as by reason of its form. We might go on analysing 'matter' under the heads of 'thought', 'emotional state', 'imaginative turn', etc., and 'form' under 'style', syntax, word, syllable, etc.; and in every ingredient we shall find the subtle presence of 'sweetness'. Similarly, in the opposed excellence of 'brilliance'. Besides these, other theorists count as many as seven more *guṇas*; and the subtle music of language can be mastered only by constant practice (*abhyāsa*) under the guidance of an accomplished master. It is this which accounts for the differences in style (*saṅghaṭanā*, *rīti*, or *bandhaucitya*) from poet to poet or even in the same poet; and it is this again which is synonymous with beauty (*śobhā*) in literature. From this

point of view Sanskrit critics show how, of a number of grammatical forms, only a few select ones best serve the poet's purpose.

IV

While the *guṇas* form a pre-requisite condition in the equipment of the poet as well as of the trained critic, there is another equally important condition, viz., *rasa* or aesthetic emotion (distinct from personal emotion) which is part of one's innate endowment, and not an acquired sensibility. It is the poet's ability to partake of *rasa*, that spurs the imagination into creative activity and which endows the whole work with a unity of tone. The critic's first function is to recognise this underlying unity of tone in a work of poetry before he pauses to appreciate its excellences in particular elements. The concept of unity of *rasa* involves unity of action or patterning of theme in deference to the considerations of loftiness of character which we have already seen.

V

By far the most important contribution of Sanskrit criticism is the principle of *alaṅkāra* or 'poetic turn', which we have reserved last for a consideration here. From many a modern writer on the subject, this concept has received, I am afraid, a none too favourable comment. It has become the fashion of the day to translate *alaṅkāra* as any trope or figure of speech, and, relying too much on the interpretation of medieval schoolmen, to take it literally to mean no more than an external embellishment like a woman's necklace, which may be added to or removed from poetry at the sweet will of the poet. Nothing can be farther from the truth as envisaged by early theorists who

first coined the term to stand for the principle of beauty in poetry *qua* poetry, as distinct from beauty in nature, beauty in woman, beauty in the fine arts, etc. While *guṇa* is coextensive with poetic beauty whose presence can be distinctly felt in a passage but which cannot be appreciated intellectually, the term *alaṅkāra* stands for the principle of beauty which can be both felt and explained in terms of ordinary language. While figures of speech are many—by a loose usage, it is true, every figure is also called *alaṅkāra* —the one principle underlying them all is also *alaṅkāra*; and it is after the latter that the science of criticism is so named. It is this, again, which draws the line clearly between the function of words in poetry as distinguished from their function in daily discourse or science. In the sound aspect alone, words in poetry will present a pattern of rhythm and rhyme, alliteration and assonance, unknown elsewhere; this is *śabdālaṅkāra*. In their sense aspect, they acquire a heightening (*atiśaya*) or undergo a transfiguration which is the *sine qua non* of the poetic act, A synonym of *alaṅkāra* in this wide eonnotation is *vakrokti* or 'oblique expression'. To poetise is to deviate from the normally accustomed habits of speech and thought; in this sense, every truly poetic line will involve some deviation or turn and it cannot be devoid of *alaṅkāra* without ceasing to be poetry. Nature description (*svabhāvokti*) too, paradoxically though, involves a special touch of the poet't genius. For, it is admitted as an *alaṅkāra* only when the exceptionally observant eye of the poet is revealed even in the description of common birds, animals, children, etc. What we admire is his eye for picturesque detail and capacity to reveal beauty in things whose beauty we had missed through familiarity. Thus understood, the principle of *alaṅkāra*

deserves to be approximated to the modern idea of 'imagery' in poetry.

Whether imagery is an integral part of poetry or but an external adjunct, an added ornament which poetry may well do without, is a recurring question in the history of literary criticism, Western as well as Indian.[7] The views of ancient Indian poets and rhetoricians on this question virtually shaped the progress of critical thought in India.

IV

The poetic tradition in India is indeed very old, even as old as the Vedas. But the Vedas were cherished by

[7] *Cf.* "The ancient writers on rhetoric spoke of them (figures) too much as mere ornaments, to be added or taken away at will; and were content to make long lists of them with an elaborate nomenclature, and to illustrate their use from poets and orators. They spoke as Professor Saintsbury has put it, as though the figures were a sugar which you sifted into the pudding in greater or lesser quantity as you thought well. Their definitions were superficial and left quite unexplained the fact of their being used at all.

For figures of speech are not mere ornaments of style to be used or dispensed with at will. In their origin they are just such natural expressions of emotion as the shedding of tears, or a dog's wagging of its tail. Where they differ from these indications of feeling is in a greater distinctness, in being extensions of the articulate, not merely the inarticulate, expression of our feeling, variations and extensions of the use of language to communicate feeling. We may shed tears for so many different reasons that we need the help of language to convey what is exactly the cause of our shedding tears at any particular moment, and it is in the effort to do this adequately by means of language that we extend the range of language by using it in this figurative fashion".

— Sir Herbert Grierson, *Rhetoric and English Composition* (2nd edn.), p. 55.

posterity more as scriptures than as poems; and the epics of Vālmīki and Vyāsa are usually regarded as indicating the dawn of secular poetry. Indian orthodoxy, however, soon invested these with religious importance and looked upon the epic heroes as embodiments of Hindu ethics codified in religious law-books. The Jains and Buddhists lost no time in using literature for purposes of religious propaganda; and the general atmosphere of the country was not at all conducive to the cultivation or preservation of purely secular poetry.

To catch a glimpse of early secular poetry, we should turn to the all but lost collections of stray lyrics in Prakrit and Sanskrit. We strike a gold mine of lyrics in Hāla's *Saptaśatī* (circa 2nd century A.D.), which is a collection of seven centuries of love-lyrics in Mahārāṣṭrī Prakrit. The whole world of unsophisticated love is the main theme of the quatrains; and we miss in them the call of moral virtue (*dharma*) which is the burden of the epics. The lyrics are permeated by a zest for life, a keen sensitivity to the beauties of nature, and a loving or lingering attachment to joys of sense. That a similar poetic vein existed in Sanskrit also can be inferred from the stray quotations we get in Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* (2nd century B. C.) and Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* (circa 200 A. D.) out of the floating literature of the period. There is a whole chapter in the latter work devoted to a discussion of different poetic measures; and we find in it how each metre was named after a graceful aspect of winsome women. *Sragdharā* (maiden decked in floral wreaths), *Vasanta-tilakā* (maiden with the vermillion mark of spring), and *Mandākrāntā* (maiden with the slow and majestic gait) are but examples taken at random. Every illustration given by Bharata amplifies the ideas

implied as it were by the proper name, each containing a lover's address to his beloved. It is this tradition which is faithfully preserved in later works like Bhartṛhari's *Śṛṅgāra-śataka*, the *Mayūrāṣṭaka* and the *Amaruśataka*. This tradition of secular poetry had to contend against the prejudice of moralists who would ban it as vulgar.[8]

Alongside of this popular current of erotic poetry, we find a highly artificial kind of poetry cultivated by stylists at courts. The court-poets tried to bridge the gulf between the epic narrative and the popular erotic tradition by combining the minimum elements of both and transforming them into something which was entirely new in point of polished style. They could startle the readers by their sound effects and turns of thought, and at the same time they could keep up a show of combining instruction with delight—instruction about the values of life (*puruṣārtha*) with the delight of genuine poetry (*rasa*). We owe the first works on Sanskrit poetics to this period of self-conscious art.

Rhetoricians like Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin standardised in their works the practice of the court-poets and could claim for poetry a status on a par with the other branches of learning. In the equipment of a poet, they gave the first place to *pratibhā* or genius, insisting at the same time on the necessity for the poet of wide scholarship (*vyutpatti*) and assiduous practice (*abhyāsa*). In their analysis of poetic beauty, they discovered the principle of *alaṅkāra* or imagery; and the importance of the principle can be realised from the fact that the study of poetry itself came, as we have already noticed, to be named *alaṅkāra-śāstra*.

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[8] *Cf.* the dictum '*kāvyālāpāṁśca varjayet*'.

An interesting feature of the early theorists (with the exception of Vāmana) is that they generally illustrate their rules with their own compositions of poetry instead of selected passages from famous poets. This makes their rules smack of dogmatism. They show a number of ways in which 'figures of sound' like alliteration (*anuprāsa*) and rhyme (*yamaka*) can be devised, and 'figures of sense' like metaphor (*rūpaka*) can be employed. They also speak of the various 'qualities' that can be felt in good poetry. At first sight the whole procedure would appear prosaic and dull.

But a closer examination would reveal that they were laying their finger on the very essence of poetry when they spoke of one running principle behind the different *alaṅkāras*. As we already saw, the principle is precisely that which distinguishes poetry from science (*śāstra*) on the one hand and from common speech (*vārtā*) on the other. They unerringly discerned that language in poetry was different not only from social usage but also from scientific discourse. They named this principle, significantly enough, as *atiśayokti* or *vakrokti* (i.e., 'flowery or hyperbolic expression'). What might from the layman's standpoint appear as a distortion was itself the normal idiom of poetry. And the various ways in which 'distorted language' could manifest itself came to be catalogued as so many 'figures', because these were the very pointers to 'beauty' in poetry.[9] Beauty is first vaguely felt by the appreciative reader; then he succeeds in characterising his feeling in terms of qualities

[9] *Cf.* "The colour of a passage will be found on examination to depend in great measure not simply on the words we choose, but on whether we use them figuratively or not, on what we call the writer's imagery."

— Sir Herbert Grierson, *Op. cit.* p. 54.

like 'sweetness' or 'brilliance'; after a more sustained intellectual effort at explaining it, he will be led up to the perception of *vakrokti,* which can be analysed in terms of one 'figure' or another. 'Implication' (*samāsokti*), 'Suppression' (*ākṣepa*), 'Indirect exression' (*paryāyokta,*) 'Hyperbole' (*utprekṣā*), 'Direct expression' (*svabhāvokti*), 'Metaphor' (*rūpaka*), 'simile' (*upamā*), 'Contrast' (*viṣama*), 'paradox' (*virodhābhāsa*), 'paronomasia' (*śleṣa*), 'Personification', 'Irony', 'Analogy', 'emotional climax'—these are only a few of the thirty-six and more 'figures' recognised.

No doubt, in many of the verses supplied by the rhetoricians illustrating 'figures', we get the impression of 'prose' dressed up as poetry through the turns of imagery; but the crux of the problem is whether the principle they postulate touches the essence of poetry or not. It is here that scope was provided for difference of opinion; and this led later theorists to formulate new explanations on more scientific grounds.

It would appear that the Alaṅkāra-school was only regularising in a formal fashion the practice of popular poets; and the strain of erotic poetry in Sanskrit was replete with poetic conventions (*kavi-samayas*). The god of Love with his five arrows of flowers (like the lotus and the jasmine), his retinue of Spring in bloom, the South Wind, and the Moon, the nightly moan of the Cakravāka birds in love, the hum of mating bees, the stately swans enjoying their honeymoon in lotus-lakes, the fawn-eyed, moon-faced, elephant-gaited beauties, their wiles and guiles—all these and a hundred other conventions had been perfected by the poets long before the theorists came on the scene. These conventions of the lyric form were natural expressions of the creative poets; and the conventions, on

analysis, could only lead to a doctrine of *alaṅkāra-cum-guṇa*.[10] The one common quality of all this lyric poetry was 'sweetness' (*mādhurya*) and 'sweetness' was an index of the *rasa* (aesthetic emotion) of *Śṛṅgāra* or Love. In epic poetry, as in prose fiction, the striking quality was *ojas* or 'floridity' corresponding to the *rasas* of *Vīra* (the Heroic) and *Raudra* (the Furious). The theorists recognised a third quality 'lucidity' (*prasāda*), which was common to both the lyric and the epic. If the idiom of poetry was analysed by them in terms of 'figures', it was because they found the poetry of their time virtually figurative and conventional.

Dramatic theory, initiated by Bharata in his monumental work –*Nāṭyaśāstra*,– emphasised *rasa* as the central principle because *abhinaya* or stage-representation of a play with the aid of music, dance and gesture could be only in terms of *rasa*. But in poetry, the place of *abhinaya* was taken up by *varṇanā* (description); and the suggestion of feelings, moods and emotions could only be through figurative expressions imbued with excellences or *guṇas*. Early theorists did not, therefore, hesitate to regard *rasas* themselves as 'figures' in poetry, since *rasas* could sometimes be evoked even without the natural aid of striking figures of speech.

With Vāmana (the author of the *Alaṅkāra-sūtra*, 8th century A.D.) the question of the 'soul' (*ātman*) of poetry came to prominence; and naturally, the emphasis shifted from the 'idiom' of poetry to its deepest content. He coined the expression *rīti* ('style') to convey the 'complex'

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[10] The flights of fancy are sometimes also called *rasa* in a very loose way, though:

'astu vastuṣu mā vā bhūt kavivāci sthito rasaḥ'

—Rājaśekhara, *Kāvyamīmāṁsā*.

of 'qualities' in poetry and recognised three styles as underlying ten qualities of 'sound' and ten of 'sense'. In this re-arrangement, *rasa* could figure, of course, only as a 'quality'. He could assert boldly that *alaṅkāras* were but appendages to the body of poetry (viz., *śabda* and *artha*) serving to embellish the soul of poetry, viz., 'style'.

A philosophical analysis of the functions of language on the one hand and the content of poetry on the other, led the next critic Ānandavardhana to formulate what he called *dhvani* (lit. 'tone') as the 'soul' because that expression, as he explained, could apply both to the 'idiom', the 'form' and the 'matter' of poetry. He recognised that the erotic sentiment was the 'sweetest' of *rasas;* and added that, in the nature of things, all *rasas,* the 'matter' of poetry, could be only suggested; suggested, however by the aid of figures. He harmonised the earlier concepts by restricting the significance of 'alaṅkāra' to 'a turn of denotation' and bringing all suggestive elements under the comprehensive sphere of *dhvani* or 'suggestion'.

Though Sanskrit literary criticism thus presents varied phases of thought, it would appear that all are agreed at the bottom on the nature of poetry and the uniqueness of the language of poetry. Vāmana's and Ānandavardhana's analyses of *guṇa* and *dhvani* respectively illustrate how literary appreciation can be directed to very minute elements in any given example of poetry. The principle of unity in a work as a whole may be ensured by the rules about *rasa* because that is the vital essence inspiring the poet towards creation. But a poet's imagination is free and obeys no law save its own. In conformity with its own law, it uses a language all its own, at once distinct from prose and science.

If 'imagery' is the word which conveys in modern

criticism this unique essence of poetic language, the ancient Indian rhetoricians arrive at the same conclusion of inevitability of imagery in devious ways. With all their stock examples and conventional categories, they do not miss this important target. Their vague explanations of *pratibhā* ('imagination') but confirm this conclusion. What they condemn is a craze for *alaṅkāras*, not the need for *alaṅkāra*. Words are indeed capable of yielding multiple meanings, even unintended ones, by force of context.[11] But the poet's employment of language is on another footing. Here, the several layers of meaning are not only all intended, but they are all made to partake in a final tone or significance (*dhvani*) which is just as clear and instantaneous as the surface meaning itself.[12] When this is not achieved, when the beauty of denotative meaning outshines that of the suggested, there is a fall in the quality of poetry from first-rate to second-rate. Such is the magic of poetry and such its logic (*aucitya*) according to Indian criticism. Criticism is a science inasmuch as it avoids the *a priori* method and formulates the rules of *aucitya* in poetry inductively. Since such a study, to be authoritative, demands on the part of the critic an intimate knowledge of something of everything, criticism is regarded as the sum of all learning:

"samaṣṭiḥ sarvaśāstrāṇāṁ sāhityamiti gīyate".

It is no more a hunting-ground for the crazy, than poetry is the vocation of dreamers.

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[11] *Cf. yathā śabdo'pi kasmiṁścit pratyāpyārthe vivakṣite; avivakṣitamapyarthaṃ prakāsayati sannidheḥ.*
—Bhartṛhari, *Vākyapadīya* (Benares edn.), II. 303.

[12] *Cf. kāvyādhvani dhvanervyaṅgyaṁ prādhānyaikanibandhanaṁ*
—Dhvanyāloka, III. 42 *seq.*

III

THE NATURE OF MEANING IN POETRY—AN INDIAN APPROACH

While semantics is a science of recent origin in the West, we find in early Indian thought more than one sustained attempt to solve the mystery of meaning in language. Of these, the realistic conclusions of the time-honoured Mīmāṁsakas and the idealist trend in the linguistic thought of the grammarians headed by Bhartṛhari may be regarded as typical. The first writers on the art of poetry contented themselves with analysing the structure of poetic language and laying down formal canons of beauty under various heads. They generally defined poetry as a unity (*sāhitya*) of *śabda* (expression) and *artha* (significance) without discussing the nature of these. Writers on drama developed the theory of *rasa* (aesthetic emotion) in great detail without raising the fundamental question of the aesthetic function of language. It was only when these two currents of poetic theory, viz., *alaṅkāra* (beauty) and *rasa,* converged in Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka* (c. 850 A.D.) that the problem of meaning in poetry came to receive a systematic consideration for the first time. It was only then that Poetics in India came to be raised to the rank of Aesthetics. An attempt is made here to present the groundwork of semantics on which Ānanda–rears his aesthetic theory of *dhvani* or suggestion in poetry.

I

The concept of *sāhitya* in Indian poetics is something akin to the modern idea of 'significant form' and the early writers like Bhāmaha proceeded to the task of analysing

that essentially indivisible whole into *śabda* (form) and *artha* (content) for purposes of formulating their aesthetic canons. They assumed that both these elements partook of beauty (*alaṅkāra*) only under the conditions of absence of flaws (*doṣa-s*) and presence of excellences (*guṇa-s*), conditions which were imposed by logical, grammatical and aesthetic considerations. Their mistake was that they just listed them together without trying to differentiate the aesthetic from the logical and the grammatical. Why 'cacaphony' should jar on the ear and why 'sweetness' (*mādhurya*) is an excellence in poetry as much as 'lucidity' (*prasāda*) and 'brilliance' (*ojas*) are questions they do not pause to answer. Though they were dimly aware that different compositions have different affective effects on the reader, they tried to explain these more in terms of stylistic structure (*saṅghaṭanā* or *rīti*), which in their analysis was the secret of 'significant form' and which varied from poet to poet according to his insight (*pratibhā*), than in terms of the texture of meaning. The theorist thought that since the individual variations of poets were infinite, he could only distinguish between two or three broad types of style, viz., the Sweet (*Vaidarbhī*), the Florid (*Gauḍī*) and the Mixed (*Pāñcālī*). Against this analytical background, they undertook to explain some clear-cut principles of beauty (*Alaṅkāra*) relating to form or content. They brought graces of rhyme and alliteration which contribute to rhythm under 'form' and graces of metaphor, irony, allusion, fancy, contrast, etc., under 'content'. Yet, nowhere do they state that these graces are just ornaments which may be added or discarded at will by the poet. On the other hand, they are convinced that there would be no beauty in poetry without one *alaṅkāra* or another, since, in their view, *alaṅkāras* are integral elements

of poetic beauty and form the very differentia of poetry. The ornamental use of figures of speech is a much later idea and the early theorists like Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin were not aware of it, though many a modern scholar has misjudged them in this respect.

A correct appreciation of the position of early theorists in regard to *alaṅkāra* is necessary to understand their idea of *śabda* and *artha* which forms the starting point for all semantic investigation. Their outspoken emphasis on *vakrokti*, or departure from the everyday use of language, as the underlying principle of all *alaṅkāras* points to their realisation of the fact that poetic language is fundamentally distinct from everyday speech (*vārtā*) on the one hand and the language of science (*śāstra*) on the other; and they happened to give this distinct feature the name of *alaṅkāra* whose field was theoretically as wide as to embrace all shades of felt beauty in poetry. Naturally, all the possible meanings in daily discourse and scientific writing, viz., the informative or literal, the secondary or metaphorical and the affective or emotive, were not only included, but imaginatively coloured so as to become aesthetic, in their illustrations of *arthālaṅkāra-s*. In their scheme, *svabhāvokti* or sensitive description of nature as it is, can be termed *alaṅkāra* only by way of exception; and emotional states (*cittavṛtti-s*) become *alaṅkāra* only when they are *rasa,* i.e., when they have undergone imaginative transfiguration.

The treatment of *alaṅkāra* by the early theorists is thus practically useful and theoretically sound in its own way; but it is deficient in philosopical investigation into the nature of poetic meaning as such. On this question it takes for granted the conclusions of Mīmāṁsā philosophers on the one hand and of thinkers on dramaturgy on the other,

and accomodates them both in the broad category of *alaṅkāra*, laying, all the while, pointed emphasis on beauty which is the index of the poet's creative activity. Nonetheless, it is clear that by *artha* (content) they never meant the dictionary meaning of words, as is often misunderstood, or the objects logically denoted by words. The rhetoricians understood by *artha* the meaning complex intended by the poet, or, in other words, his theme.

II

Now we may turn to the Mīmāṁsā school of philosophy which provided the basic semantic material for the researches of literary theorists. A serious consideration of the problem of meaning was forced upon this school which was concerned with vindicating the significance of assertions in the Veda which was, apparently, a confused mass of fact, myth and ritual. They laid down not only the conditions of context, etc., which were necessary to understand the meaning of sentences in the scriptures, but also the theory that the meaning of a sentence (*vākyārtha*) is its whole purport (*tātparya*). They were the first in India to hold that 'potency' (*śakti*) should be regarded as a distinct category in ontology; and according to them, every sentence has a potency for purport which may admit of error in the case of human speakers, but which is infallible in the case of scriptural statements as they are not of human origin (*apauruṣeya*).

As components of a sentence, they recognised words which too have a potency to enter into relation with other words and a potency to express their conventional meaning as defined in the dictionary or their secondary meaning as indicated by the context. The potency of words to

signify conventional meaning is given the name *abhidhā* (primary power) and the potency to signify secondary meaning is given the name *lakṣaṇā* (indicatory power). In the sentence 'He is an ass', the dictionary meaning of the word ass is due to *abhidhā*; the figurative meaning of a fool is due to *lakṣanā*. The second is as much sanctioned by usage as the first but individual speakers may use words in their own private way also to suit their meaning as in the language of lovers. Emotion does indeed play a part in the metaphorical usage of words in life. But it is raw emotion, and is not the same as aesthetic emotion in poetry. Of the two schools of Mīmāṁsā, one (Prābhākara) holds that the sentence as a whole expresses an undivided meaning (*anvitābhidhāna*), while the other (Bhāṭṭa) believes that word-meanings get related before the sentence-meaning is conveyed (*abhihitānvaya*).

III

The school of Grammarians (Vaiyākaraṇas) developed a theory of meaning which is more idealistic than that of the Mīmāṁsakas. Their best exponent was Bhartṛhari who propounded the theory of *sphoṭa* (lit. 'burst'), a concept which is primarily semantic. According to this theory, meaning is revealed in a flash by the *whole* and indivisible aspect of speech, an aspect which underlies all distinctions of syllables or sounds. When we say 'cow', the three letters are uttered in sequence, howsoever unnoticeable; and the total meaning of the animal we grasp is not the result of any summation of the part-meaning of the three letters. The words analysable into letters in varying shades of tone and pitch must have, according to this school, an abiding whole aspect which alone can reveal a whole

meaning and this aspect is termed *sphoṭa*. Since words can have meaning only in the context of a sentence, the *sphoṭa* of the sentence as a whole should be regarded as the revealer of meaning. This involves recognition of the 'revealing potency' in the whole *sphoṭa*-aspect of words and sentences. The sentence reveals the *sphoṭa* which in its turn reveals the meaning in one unitary flash. The revealer of meaning is thus the semantic aspect of *śabda* and the revealer of this in turn is its own linguistic aspect. The other schools of Indian philosophy generally regard the *sphoṭavāda* as a spurious hypothesis.

IV

Bharata, the authority on dramaturgy approached the problem of aesthetic experience from a purely psychological standpoint. Recognising *rasa* as the goal of all art, he said that the major function of the different art-forms was only to evoke *rasa* in the percipient. Dance gestures, musical notes, and poetic language, all shared this function in common. He did not undertake to define this function scientifically, but used descriptive terms like *niṣpatti* (causation), *bhāvanā* (stimulation) and *abhivyakti* (manifestation). His chief concern was in contrasting raw emotional states in life (*cittavṛtti*-s) with the *rasa*-s in art. In life, moods are momentary and fleeting; they change as situations change and man has no control over situations. Even dominant emotions like love and hatred obey no artistic unity, and are often subordinated or accommodated to the urgent claims of economic and social living. In life we are involved in the emotions, and have no time to contemplate them dininterestedly. But in art man throws away the thraldom of circumstances and turns to con-

template the emotions; and this gives him aesthetic joy. Even a passing mood may be given an artistic permanance as in lyric poetry; and the dominant emotions, with the complexity unknown to everyday life, might make the theme of a whole epic. The emotional unity in the situation, plot and characters is absent in life and present only in the best literature. Therefore, the sympathetic heart of the reader delights in *rasa*, only through literature. The rules of Bharata are mainly devoted to lay down the conditions of plot, character and style that contribute, towards *rasa-s*, in all their variety. Even the tragic emotion becomes singularly pleasurable in poetry because it is aesthetically contemplated and not personally suffered. And even fiction comes to be termed as artistically true for the same reason.

V

It required a mastermind to propound a consistent theory out of the tangled skein of these apparently disconnected strands of thought and the Dhvanyāloka of Ānanda- accomplished the miracle by a singular stroke of genius.

Ānanda- took his firm stand on the foundation of *rasa* set up by Bharata and applying the criteria of potencies propounded by the Mīmāṁsakas, found them totally inadequate to explain the experience of *rasa* which was *sui generis*. Neither the primary nor the secondary usages of words could in themselves explain *rasa* (not even *tātparya*). A third potency which shines through them and yet rises above them had to be postulated to explain *rasa*. But the difficulty was that if everyday language could implicitly convey affective meaning or the speaker's content, and if philosophers found no necessity of postulating a third linguistic function, in poetry too there would be no scientific

basis for such a postulate. Ānanda- was up against all the currents of traditional thought in this respect. Yet he boldly vindicated that meaning in poetry was primarily *rasa,* a thing quite different from the speaker's intent or affective meaning in life. *Rasa,* the *sine qua non* of poetry could be realised only through the poet's conformity to aesthetic principles imposed by it, and could be felt only by men of cultivated taste. The principle of unity of *rasa* and its implications had never before been explained so pointedly.

The term *dhvani* of the grammarians came in handy to Ānanda- while designating this revealing or aesthetic function of language, exclusively found in poetry. He called every good poem, taken as a whole, by the name *dhvani.* The individual words would never cease to have their primary and secondary senses; but they would only serve as means to the end of aesthetic significance. In poetry, then, the suggestive function was not confined to words, but extended even to primary and secondary meanings on the one hand, and to every aspect of poetic technique on the other.

No doubt the earlier writers on poetics had showed vaguely their awareness of these considerations in their ideas of *guṇa, alaṅkāra, rīti,* etc. Ānanda-'s complaint against them is that they never cared to distinguish between the pre-eminent and the perfunctory, between the means and the end. He interprets that their *artha-alaṅkāra* can only mean 'embellishments of subject' and 'subject' can denote only an 'idea', not *rasa*. So interpreted, all *alaṅkāra-s* become mere beautifiers (only ornamental figures of speech), the beautified element being the poetic idea, and not *rasa.* This involves logically the pre-eminence of primary meaning, though by definition, the presence of *rasa* cannot be overlooked in any instance of poetry. Ānanda- admits

that such instances of poetry too might prove popular, and assigns them a second place in his scheme of classification. First-rate poetry is only that wherein the pre-eminence of *rasa* is assuredly *felt* by the man of taste. If in a pedantic piece the effect of *rasa* is all but lost, it is, strictly speaking, no poetry; it is but *citra* or word-spinning.

Thus, in Ānanda-'s review of early poetics, we have a dual role assigned to figures of speech; one as promoters of *rasa* and the other as important in themselves. One is the way of genius; and the other of talent. Both are desirable; but the first is better. Nor is it all. The art of *dhvani* in Ānanda-'s opinion is wider than that of *rasa* also. It includes in its wide domain the limitless field of poetic ideas (*vastu*) and also figures which are not directly stated, but indirectly implied. The obliquely suggested idea and figurative idea come to be ranked on a par with *rasa-dhvani* itself, when felt as pre-eminent, because in Ānanda-'s opinion there is nothing that is not raised to the rank of pure poetry by the magic touch of *dhvani* or the aesthetic function.

The influence of Ānanda-'s theory of *dhvani* was far-reaching in the history of Indian literary criticism. It provided the much-needed corrective in shaping the taste of Sanskrit literary critics. In Indian criticism, appreciation of the underlying tone of a poem as a whole unit, in which all the elements of technique have their share to contribute, is a truth which found its first spokesman in Ānanda-. His work contains hundreds of striking examples from the very best in Sanskrit poetry which serve to establish his theory of *dhvani*. His analysis of the nature of meaning in poetry appears to be substantially sound even by modern standards.

IV

BHAṬṬA TAUTA'S DEFENCE OF POETRY

Poetry in India originated as a handmaid of religion; and it ran for centuries in the groove prescribed by orthodoxy. The celebrated epics of Vālmīki and Vyāsa were construed as popular and pleasing presentations of the ethical codes laid down in law-books (*Smṛti* or *Dharmaśāstra*).

The ends or values sought to be achieved by the moral codes are the *puruṣārthas—dharma* (righteousness), *artha* (wealth), *kāma* (pleasure) and *mokṣa* (liberation). While all the early codes (*śāstras*) are agreed on the primacy of the first three (called *trivarga*), philosopical schools emphasize the fourth, which alone, according to them, is the highest end of human life.

If Vālmīki is extolled by Indian commentators as the best poet, it is mainly because Rāma, in their opinion, represents a living embodiment of all the precepts in the *śāstras* regarding the triple values of life, and is a hero *par excellence*. The *Rāmāyaṇa* is great because it is both didactic and poetic. Vyāsa's epic must be no less praiseworthy for its wider canvas on the one hand and for its exposition of *mokṣa* on the other. Even the Bhuddist poet Aśvaghoṣa readily admits that he has deliberately used the sugar-coating of poetry to popularize the otherwise dry truth. Knowing the secret of popular appeal, he makes free use of the erotic and shows rare skill in devising melodious measures. But with all that he prefers to be known to posterity as a preacher rather than as a poet.

Kālidāsa and Bhāravi, who are the two premier representatives of the later form of court-epics (*mahākāvyas*) are no exceptions to the trend we noted above. Their

concern with poetry as a fine art is only matched by the didactic intent which underlies their plot and characterization. Their works point to the necessity of keeping the claims of *artha* and *kāma* well within the bounds of *dharma*. Even the lyric *Cloud Messenger* does not appear to be an exception, in view of its initial reference to the hero's lapse and the curse consequent.

The "didactic tradition" in Sanskrit poetry was thus followed by poets and patronized by kings until it eventually came to be standardized by early rhetoricians by the sixth century. Finding that poetry had been assigned no place in the traditional schemes of study (*vidyāsthānas*), rhetoricians like Bhāmaha began to claim for poetry the highest place, inasmuch as it included in itself the essence of all the arts and all the sciences, and could be relied upon to instruct delightfully in all the values of life including *mokṣa*.

Philosophers appear to have felt that the claims of poetry were being pitched too high. In the golden age of philosophical systematization (c. 500-800 A.D.), almost every thinker was actively engaged in clarifying the concept of *mokṣa*; and there was little chance of the views of rhetoricians going unchallenged, especially when they were encroaching upon the very *raison d'être* of the philosophical schools. Although the different systems of philosophy (*darśanas*), like the earlier *Dharmaśāstras*, were not troubled about poetry so long as it did not clash with their premises, the inevitable clash between the immediate end of poetry and the ultimate value of philosophy could not be long avoided. So long as the theorists of poetry were content to hold that poetic delight was an end subsidiary to moral instruction, there was no conflict of interests. But when

the apologists for poetry reversed their original position and came to hold that *Rasa* (aesthetic experience) was the value of values, when they began affirming, on ostensibly metaphysical grounds, that it was virtually on a par with *mokṣa* (Spiritual Beatitude) itself, the clash with the philosophers became unavoidable.

Many a battle must have been fought by the champions of poetry and philosophy; but almost all the works that arose in the heat of controversy have been lost, and the curious student has to content himself with faint echoes he might happen to hear in the course of laborious research. Scholars know that the addition of *Śānta* (Tranquillity), first as a ninth *rasa,* and later its vindication as the '*rasa*' *par excellence,* are to be traced to this period of hot controversy. All that we know with certainty is that metaphysical explanations of art experience were in the air some time before the great Abhinavagupta wrote his *magnum opus,* the *Abhinavabhārati,* and finalized them once and for all.

Abhinavagupta himself has testified more than once to the fact that he owes most of his ideas to his revered *guru,* Bhaṭṭa Tauta, who wrote a treatise called *Kāvya-kautuka* or "The Wonder of Poetry." Among the stray quotations from this lost work which are available to us today, very few indeed have a bearing on the problem we are considering here. Our regard for Tauta is mostly confined to his celebrated definition of *Pratibhā,* which reads almost like a Romantic's account of the "Imagination":—

> *Pratibhā* is the faculty of imagination which is freshly creative. A poet is one who is skilled in the artistic expression of that which is vivified by *pratibhā*; and his work is Poetry.

One can catch here some glimpses of the new trend in Sanskrit poetics. Poetry is now coming into its own,

shaking off the accumulated shackles of extra-literary categories. Poetry is being looked upon as a "Wonder," a thing of beauty, valuable in itself, for its own sake.

It emerges from another famous fragment of Tauta that he did not hesitate to raise the poet to the rank of a "seer" (*ṛṣi*) and to declare boldly that the poet-seer was greater than the seers of *śāstras,* because of his creative genius. According to him:—

> Two are the paths of *Sarasvatī*: One, Science, the result of intellect; and, two, Poetry, the product of *pratibhā*.

One feels happy indeed to be able to read a few more quotations from Tauta's *Wonder of Poetry* in Śrīdhara's *Kāvyaprakāśa-viveka,* published recently for the first time.[1] The four verses preserved in this old commentary (13th century A.D.) throw interesting sidelights on the polemic between the champions of poetry and philosophy.

Śrīdhara introduces the four verses by stating the contention of philosophers who are prepared to concede, in a way, that poetry might be of help in the attainment of the first three values of life, but who demur when it comes to admitting the efficacy of poetry as a means to *mokṣa*. Their complaint is that poetry rouses the very passions whose absolute restraint is demanded by *mokṣa*. They point to the sensuous and erotic elements that are preponderant in poetry and ask how these, which are really hindrances, can be of help in the achievement of *mokṣa*.

The objection seems unanswerable indeed; but Tauta makes short work of it in his ready rejoinder:—

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[1] Edited by Professor S. P. Bhattacharya and published in the Calcutta Sanskrit College Research Series as No. VII, 1959. P.9.

Surely, there is no *real* existence of sense-objects in poetic experience. How, then, can you complain that passions are profoundly excited by poetry?

Should you urge that the dominant state of mind (revealed in poetry) is itself the object, well, your position contradicts the nature of aesthetic experience wherin the state of mind *is not felt* as an outside object. (Verse 1)

If you should say that "aesthetic experience" itself is passion, you fail to distinguish once again between aesthetic emotion and passion for women. If you persist in holding that the badness of the stimulus is inferred from the badness of the response, we have only to ask you back how a character like Sītā can ever have dual objects of love. (Verse 2)

Our position can be stated thus: Just as dust is used to clean up a rusty[2] mirror, the mind of the critic is purified of passion through passion itself![3] (Verse 3)

How can we ever have an all-inclusive experience (like that of *mokṣa*) at a jump, without the aid of a like experience [*viz.*, *rasa* in poetry]?[4]

Therefore the Sage (Bharata) is rather earnest in stressing a delight known while discoursing on the ultimate values. (Verse 4)

This "purification" theory of Bhaṭṭa Tautta may well remind one of the theory of "katharsis" in the *Poetics* of Aristotle. In the history of Sanskrit poetics, however, Tauta's contribution is significant as coming from not only an able advocate of poetry but also one who virtually inaugurated true aesthetics in Sanskrit, perfected later by his worthy disciple, Abhinavagupta.

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[2] The original word *mala* means both "dust" and "rust". Polished plates of metal were used as mirrors in ancient India.

[3] The idea has its close parallel in the Āyurvedic principle—*uṣṇamuṣṇena śāmyati*. *Cf.* Milton' explanation of "katharsis" in homoeopathic terms: "As fire drives out fire, so pity pity."

[4] *Cf.* "It is not the business of poetry to save souls; it makes souls worth saving."—James Elroy Flecker.

V

TRADITION AND EXPERIMENT IN SANSKRIT POETRY

Sanskrit poetry is as old as the immemorial Vedas raised by tradition to the rank of sacred revelation. The poetry of the Ṛgveda represents an age when religion and science, life and literature, were almost interchangeable terms, when there was no sharp distinction yet between the different aspects of human personality like feeling, reason and imagination; when the functions of the poet and the priest, of the mystic and the myth-maker, of the seer and the worldling, still remained undivided. This vast body of sacred literature in archaic idiom, with only occasional gleams of secular interest, lies outside the scope of the present article, which purports to survey in broad outline the interaction of tradition and experiment in the long and chequered history of secular Sanskrit poetry.

Though all are agreed that we step into poetry proper in the Indian epics, viz., the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*, there is no unanimity of opinion among modern scholars about their age or authenticity. If we turn to tradition, we find that, though it distinguishes the epics from the Vedas by regarding the former as of human authorship in contrast to the latter which are divine revelations, it still reckons the poets Vālmīki and Vyāsa as two hoary sages, entitled to veneration. We find already in the epic age the cleavage between the sophisticated life in cities and the saintly life of sages in their forest hermitages. But the gulf is not yet so wide as to shut out intercommunication. One might, in fact, go so far as to say that the kernel of the two epics is concerned with the commerce between the two worlds,

the one of courtly sophistication and the other of saintly asceticism. Take away the forest of Daṇḍaka from the *Rāmāyaṇa* and you will have practically emptied the epic of its essence. The important role of the forest-life in the *Mahābhārata* may not be so obvious at first sight; but it will not take long to see that the epic really opens with the circumstances leading to the birth of the Pāṇḍava heroes in a forest, that their equipment for "the great war" was complete only after a long apprenticeship of twelve years' stay in a forest, and that the *finale* of the epic too presents to us a glowing picture of the ascetic ideal of forest-life. The Aristotelian test of the "beginning," "middle" and "end," or, in our own land, the principle of unity of *rasa* enunciated by Ānandavardhana, shows how the two epics revolve round a similar axis and how Vālmīki and Vyāsa are deliberately devising their plots to bring out the message of an ideal synthesis between conflicting ideals of worldliness and renunciation. Winternitz has discovered these alternating currents of thought even in the numerous ballads and episodes (*upākhyānas*) which are imbedded in the voluminous *Mahābhārata* and which might well represent an earlier phase of popular poetry in India.

Our analysis above is confirmed by the general account of these two ancient ideals preserved in ancient law-books and codes like that of Manu on the one hand and in Upanishadic literature on the other.

The dawn of court poetry, by about the beginning of the Christian era, saw a growing split between the functions of the poet and the sage. The poet became more and more self-conscious of his art while the thinker began to forge a new kind of laconic prose to record his reflections in. This is the age which marks simultaneously the birth of artistic

poems as well as philosophical *sūtras*. With characteristic love of analysis, the Indian mind evolved—though the beginnings are hazy—in this age not only the guiding rules of poetics but also the principles governing the universe; and the theistic trends of popular religion were there in the background.

No wonder if the two national epics served as models to the new poets in this formative stage of classical Sanskrit poetry. But the wonder is that none attempted to imitate them in entirety. A single heroic or romantic episode in the epic was found to be more than enough for the new poet to show his skill; and he borrowed, if at all, only the mythology of the epics, their occasional lyric vein and their way of treating Nature as suffused with human emotion and feeling. But he was a bold inventor in other directions: in devising a hundred new metrical patterns; in perfecting schemes of rhythm, rhyme and assonance; in enriching the Sanskrit vocabulary by discovering fresh turns of linguistic usage to denote an identical thought or different shades of thought through a variety of synonyms—*e. g.*, the idea of "sea," to take an instance at random, can be conveyed by no less than a hundred words in Sanskrit by employing synonyms of "water" with different descriptive suffixes (*vāri-dhi, jala-dhi, ambu-rāśi*, etc.) or synonyms of "river" with the addition of "lord" (*sarit-pati, apāṁ-pati*, etc,) or synonyms of "gem" or synonyms of "salt" with the addition of "home" (*ratnākara, lavaṇākara*, etc.), apart from regular synonyms whose derivations are doubtful—thus exploiting all the linguistic resources that a formally perfect grammar like that of Pāṇini could provide; and, above all, in discovering new turns of imagery, at once striking and artistic. It is because of the numerous experiments, in both

form and substance, of these pre-Kālidāsa pioneers that Sanskrit became so refined and polished once for all as to extract from a linguist like Sir William Jones the encomium:—

> The Sanskrit language is of a wonderful structure, more perfect than Greek, more copious than Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either.[1]

To these anonymous pioneers, again, we owe the genesis of more than one literary *genre*—drama and lyric (erotic and religious), prose romance and fable, panegyric and parable, besides the time-honoured court epic (*mahākāvya*). The rich harvest of the next period in all these forms presupposes this seed-time of rigorous experiment on the part of poets and critics alike. The beauty of the popular Prakrits too had not escaped their attention: we find an honoured place assigned to Prakrit in plays as well as lyrics.

This formative period of varied experimentation, whose traces have almost faded away, leads us on to the Golden Age of Sanskrit poetry, whose two peaks are represented by Kālidāsa and Bhāravi, one in the North and the other in the South.

What was just a hint in Vālmīki flowers forth into a perfect lyric, the *Meghadūta*, in the hands of the master-poet Kālidāsa, while the genius of Bhāravi is not at all lyrical. In his court epics, Kālidāsa also achieved a sweetness of poetic diction and elegance of thought rarely equalled. His genius left its indelible impress on everything he touched, poetry or drama; and his writing remains to this day the model of the best Sanskrit, combining ease and grace, form and significance. More than his insight into subtlest human emotions and his communion with the

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[1] *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. I, p. 422.

secrets of Nature, what marks him out as the true heir of Vālmīki is his underlying message, which is a happy blend of the epic values, worldly and spiritual.

In this Bhāravi bears a family resemblance to Kālidāsa though unlike him in every other way. Bhāravi's poetry is vigorous and powerful, despite his pedantic diction; and he prefers direct instruction to Kālidāsa's undertone of suggestion. But what makes him stand out as a stylist is his parade of acrostics. Unlike Kālidāsa, he often lets his learning get the better of his poetry and the result, therefore, is uneven.

Soon both Kālidāsa and Bhāravi became "the poet's poets"; and the age-long tradition of the sages came under a cloud. The spirit lost, the letter began to exercise supreme sway over the the next generation of poets, among whom Bhaṭṭi, Māgha and Śrīharṣa deserve particular mention. All these poets are more learned than the earlier masters and carry the process of external refinement and polish to its acme. They revel in new coinages and quaint conceits. Striving after effect, they not only utilize all the paraphernalia of poetic conventions (*kavi-samayas*) known through books; they also invent new ones. In their enthusiasm to arrest the attention of the learned, they borrow their imagery from sources such as the philosophical systems, grammar and etymology. But the two disciplines which held them in thrall were Erotics and Poetics. They were, indeed the first to indulge in excesses of description and to start the convention of set themes for an epic. Even in these exercises, artificial to a degree, the spirit of experimentation is not wanting. They narrowed the province of poetry in their love of formal rules; but they also broadened the field of poetic conceits:

and imagery. The poetic traditions of Kālidāsa and Bhāravi assume new shapes in their hands, more startling, if less appealing.

Meanwhile the lyric tradition which developed apace in the hands of masters like Bhartṛhari and Amaru proved more and more popular and paved the way for revaluations of theories of poetry. Ānandavardhana (ninth century) was the champion of a new theory of literature according to which *dhvani* or indirect suggestion was the very soul of poetry as well as drama, and without which the figures of speech were of little or no value. In his treatment the poet's imagination was given the highest place in the creative process; and not a bare mention along with equipment and practice as in the earlier texts of rhetoric. This reaction of literary critics (*sahṛdayas*) against the artificial excesses of post-Kālidāsa poets gained ground throughout India; and we find again the poets of a later period turning to fresh fields of poetry.

Poets like Padmagupta and Bilhaṇa (eleventh century) take contemporary kings as their heroes and try to recapture the manner of Kālidāsa in their readable historical poems. Despite their shortcomings as historians, judged as poets, they merit praise inasmuch as they proved how poetry could be distilled from current history itself. The heritage of mythology was freely utilized by them to invest contemporary kings with the glory of epic heroes. Bāṇa's example of prefixing an autobiography to a work was also emulated by Bilhaṇa. These are indeed new experiments which changed the course of the old poetic tradition considerably without departing from it in spirit.

A noteworthy experiment in blending the lyric and the opera through songs and stanzas is noticed in Jayadeva's

Gītagovinda, which provided the model for a number of imitators. The impact of the rising literatures in the vernaculars provided new themes; and semi-historical biographies of great saints and teachers like Śaṁkara found favour with more than one author of note. Many a poet was drawn to the numerous heroes provided by popular religion; and the old tradition of epic poetry found new forms breathing devotional fervour. But judging from the paucity of original inspiration, one cannot help concluding that Sanskrit came to pass through a period of decadence and decline.

It was, of course, the contact with Western literature that brought the much needed *aufklarung* into modern Indian literatures which were throughout basking in the sunshine of Sanskrit. Apart from the long line of imitators of Western models, two poets that stand out as true heirs of Indian tradition are Tagore and Sri Aurobindo. Each of these, in his own way, has succeeded in recapturing the deathless spirit of Indian poetry in numerous forms. Sanskrit poetry may be vivified yet by the infusion of such new ideas from those who are both poets and sages. Inspired men with poetic vision that can penetrate unerringly into the eternal truths underlying our ancient mythology, might yet succeed in writing immortal epics in Sanskrit in view of its unbroken and live epic tradition. If the present crisis in civilization is to be immortalized in an epic at all—who can foretell?—Sanskrit might well come in handy for the future poet. Sanskrit poetry has always stood for the ideal, and in all its myriad forms, has idealized the real and turned away from the starkly real. It now throws out a challenge to poets to extract significance from life today. Whether Sanskrit is a dead or live language depends on how the poets take up the challenge.

VI

THE KEY TERMS OF SANSKRIT LITERARY CRITICISM RECONSIDERED

We often find Sanskrit classics mentioned with respect; but our interest in them, if we are to be honest, is decidedly tepid. Sanskrit critical theories are usually taken for granted or ignored altogether. Though eminent scholars have written histories of Sanskrit Poetics, very few have undertaken the task of demonstrating the practical application of these theories to living literatures. The demonstration, however desirable, is rendered difficult because scholars themselves do not seem to be unanimous on the precise meanings of even the key words in Sanskrit literary theory. It is proposed to discuss the significance of a few such terms in this short article.

Poetry, says Bhāmaha, is *śabda* and *artha* fused together *(sahitau)*. The English equivalents usually provided are "word" and "meaning" and the matter is left at that. None is any the wiser for this so-called definition of poetry. Every cinema poster and every grocer's bill may be poetry at that rate. But the ancient writers themselves could not have been vague; for from the earliest critic, Bharata, down to the latest critic of today these terms were used and understood precisely. All the elements of the poetic art directed to please the ear came under *śabda* while *artha* embraced what we call the poetic theme or subject. The fusion of the two was the poetic process. This was indeed the foundation on which the theorists began to rear the structures of their deeper analyses.

The first and foremost critical concept in Sanskrit literary theory is *alaṅkāra*. Literally it means ornament,

and is usually translated as "figures of speech" in English. The critic of today at once equates it with the eternal truism about the extraneous nature of all embellishment and jumps to the conclusion that the ancient theorists were engrossed in cataloguing or indexing a number of needless tropes. But, as a matter of fact, ancients like Bhāmaha were trying to prove that beauty in poetry is distinct from beauty in other arts, and they used the word *alaṅkāra* in its widest aesthetic application to include imagery as well as emotion *(rasādi)*. They were aware that, more often than not, imagery was itself the language of poetic emotion, though they did not rule out the possibility that emotion might sometimes succeed without imagery. In other words, imagery *(alaṅkāra)* was not, in the opinion of Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin, a superimposed embellishment of poetry (otherwise originated), but its integral constituent *(ātman)*.

They never pursued the trivial metaphor of body and soul to explain *śabdārthau* and *alaṅkāras*, a metaphor which became a convenient device in the hands of later writers to bring the doctrine of *alaṅkāras* into cheap disrepute. Rightly understood, the doctrine of *alaṅkāras* in its dual aspect—one relating to sound impressions and the other to poetic images—will be seen to touch the very heart of the matter. It emphasizes how the indirect use of language *(gamakatva)* or circuitous speech *(vakrokti)* is of the very essence of the poetic process. It also keeps the door open for a few exceptions which may be pure poetry by sheer sweep of personal or universalized emotion *(rasavad, preyas, ūrjasvin, samāhita,* and *bhāvika alaṅkāras)*.

Vāmana shifted the emphasis from *alaṅkāra* to what he called *rīti* (translated usually as "style") by narrowing down the significance of the word *alaṅkāra*. He wanted the

metaphor of body and soul, sagely avoided by Bhāmaha, to work. It could not; he therefore had to posit that the intrinsic beauty of poetic *śabda* and *artha* (a beauty designated as *alaṅkāra* by Bhāmaha) was analyzable into *guṇas* (usually translated as "qualities"; "constituents" is better) which certainly related not to the exterior body but to the interior personality as a whole. For the vindication of the metaphor a poetic soul was still needed, and Vāmana announced with triumph the age-old category of conventional styles[1] under a new name, *rīti*.

Rīti being itself an abstraction, Vāmana had to exercise all his skill to distinguish, on the one hand, ten *guṇas* of *śabda* to include such features of craftsmanship as verbal felicity, dignity, compactness, and gradual ascent or descent in syllabic quality and quantity; and, on the other, ten *guṇas* of *artha* to cover diverse elements of poetic art like compactness of idea, looseness, clarity, wittiness, evenness of thought, the creative spark, indirect manner, impressiveness and emotional fervour. The *guṇas* too being abstractions, Vāmana's doctrine could hardly win any following. To the extent that he inflated his *guṇas*—Bhāmaha recognized only three—Vāmana had to depreciate the *alaṅkāras*. While this theory fitted into the metaphor of body and soul very conveniently, it switched off criticism from imagery to a hundred elusive details. The essential and the insignificant were all heaped together in a jumble. The statement that all these twenty *guṇas* are present in the best style, *viz.*, the *Vaidarbhī*, while a few alone are instanced in the other two is a poor solution indeed of the basic problem. It is curious

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[1] Their number was originally two: 1, the Plain (*Vaidarbhī*) and, 2, the Florid (*Gauḍī*), The Mixed (*Pāñcālī*) was added by Vāmana.

that even the question of the revelation of poetic personality is well-nigh absent in this doctrine of styles.

The pursuit of the metaphor was continued, and it was given to Ānandavardhana to clear the jungle and point to the essentials of poetry from all sides. He placed his finger on the indirect element in all great poetry—a fact already hinted at by Bhāmaha—analyzed it most minutely and precisely for the first time and demonstrated that it was the soul of poetry. Though he said "soul," he did not, like Vāmana, equate it with the soul of man, but compared it with the irresistible charm of lovely women. And in this indirect or suggested wealth of poetry he included not only poetic emotion but also imagery and ideas *(vastu)*. He expounded this first element of poetry under the name *dhvani*. While emotions and feelings could not be appealingly communicated in any way other than the indirect, the other two elements, *viz.*, *alaṅkāra* and *vastu*, could be conveyed directly also. But, the moment the suggestive element appeared in a piece, it would be poetry—of the first order if pre-dominantly beautiful, or of the second order if subordinate in beauty to the directly communicated meaning (*guṇībhūtavyaṅgya*). If the indirect element were absent altogether or almost absent, it would cease to be poetry and be something like science or, if full of figures, something like a painting (*citra*). We should not forget here that images indirectly conveyed are of the first class of poetry, and even direct images having the undertone of suggestion are of the second class mentioned.

Ānandavardhana hastens to add that both classes of poetry are *equally* charming in point of beauty. It is only when imagery has no poetic purpose to serve that it fails. It would be a mistake to think that Ānandavardhana

underrated the value of *alaṅkāra*. In fact he explained its function more searchingly than even its first propounder, Bhāmaha. He gave a decent burial to the medley of Vāmana's *guṇas* and retained only the original three of Bhāmaha (*viz.*, sweetness, lucidity and brilliance). And even these three were associated by him, not with style primarily, but with poetic emotion (*rasa*). The poetic personality received due attention from him for the first time. Nor was *rasa* overemphasized, though in theory it was raised to the highest status of *dhvani* because its almost universal association with *alaṅkāras* was duly acknowledged. This is the highest point reached by Sanskrit literary criticism.

Then the word *rasa* was interpreted by Abhinavagupta as a synonym for aesthetic experience, and the claims of *rasa* so understood shoved away the claims of poetic imagery. Poetic imagery came to be counted as less intrinsic to poetry than *rasa*. If Mammaṭa tried to hold the balance even once again, Viśvanātha pulled in the opposite direction. To the latest writers the reconciliation between the two became a dilemma.

Among the words in Sanskrit poetics whose meaning changes from writer to writer, *alaṅkāra* and *rasa* are the most elusive and yet the most important. In the famous definition of Bharata, *rasa* is a thought-feeling synthesis instanced primarily in art representation or acting (*nāṭya*). By the combined effect of the characters in excitant natural setting (*vibhāva*), their emotional gestures (*anubhāva*) and fleeting moods (*vyabhicāribhāva*), *rasa* is said to be called forth. All these are primarily bound up with dominant emotions (*sthāyibhāvas*) as causes, effects and accessories. Now the fundamental question is about the *locus* of these *bhāvas* which are transformed into *rasa*. Since all these

are bodied forth only in the imagination of the creative artist in the first instance, it seems pretty certain that the *locus* meant by Bharata was the artist's mind. That is why Vālmīki, Kālidāsa and Ānandavardhana could repeat with one voice that the poet's sorrow (*śoka*) transfigured itself into poetry (*śloka*). The process whereby the poet's *bhāva* is communicated to readers is perforce *dhvani* or suggestion, because a direct statement of an emotional state ceases to be emotive to the hearer. Such is the essence of Ānandavardhana's theory, which has been stretched to needless lengths amid academic hair-splittings by Abhinavagupta. To the latter, both the *bhāva* and the *rasa* are associated only with the mind of the critic because he alone has aesthetic experience (*āsvāda*).

As an English poet-critic, William Empson, warns us today:—

> All conventions have their pomp
> And all styles can come down to noise.

But the Sanskrit theorists were not content with laying down conventions only. They persistently grappled with the eternal question of the relative importance of imagery and emotion in poetry. The randomness or inevitability of each in relation to the other has been the pivot around which their discussions have turned. But for the fact that the same key terms have been used in different senses by different writers, leading to a good deal of confusion, the findings of Sanskrit writers may be of great moment even to literary criticism today. This article is a modest attempt towards clearing up some of the outstanding misunderstandings.

VII

RASA AS A CANON OF LITERARY CRITICISM

Our ancient critics are agreed in regarding Vālmīki as the father of Sanskrit poetry. There is the well-known story of his overflowing pity for a bird in grief assuming the form of verse. Two of our greatest poets—Kālidāsa and Bhavabhūti—refer to this incident as an evidence of the tenderness of the poet's heart. To serve quite a different purpose, this incident is quoted by the author of the *Dhvanyāloka*. He intends to rear a new theory of literary criticism on its basis.

Now it is one thing to characterize poetry in general, and a lyric outburst in particular, as a spontaneous overflow of powerful emotions, and another thing to characterize a whole epic like the *Rāmāyaṇa* as an embodiment of a particular emotion like pity or sorrow. Ānandavardhana does both—the one in his first chapter, and the other in his last. Again, it is not very clear in the first chapter whether he is talking of the lyric outburst only (namely, the distich *"mā niṣāda..."*) or of poetry in general. But the point does not affect the main argument to be set out here.

If all our critics are agreed on any point, it is on the high mission of poetry. To them, poetry is no amusement for an idle hour. It is a serious art, which teaches through pleasing. Poetry delights the reader with its emotions and, almost without his knowledge, instructs him about the values of life so as to bring about a healthy change in his outlook. This dual aim of poetry can only be explained in terms of our epic and dramatic literature, with its flawless gods and heroes and their unfailing achievements. The greatness of a poem or a play thus depended on the

greatness of the theme. But what determined the nature of either as poem or play was, in the language of Bharata, *rasa*.

Rasa is a term from dietetics, meaning taste or relish, and introduced by Bharata into the field of dramatic criticism to denote the complex of aesthetic enjoyment. According to his analysis, it is a complex involving almost the whole range of psycho-physical responses man is capable of. Drama or poetry is the stimulus by which multiple and ever-fleeting moods, feelings and responses are made to fall into a pattern around the more or less permanent nucleus of an emotion. This organized response-complex of the connoisseur is termed *rasa* and its possible varieties are eight or nine, depending on the classic number of nuclear emotions (*sthāyibhāvas*). Though one of the oft repeated remarks of Bharata is that a play should have room for *all* the *rasas,* the demands of plot and character determine the nature and circumscribe the number of the *rasas* that can actually be made prominent in any work. In a *nāṭaka,* or the play *par excellence,* the plot has for its end the hero's achievement of one or more of the triple values of life, *viz.,* love, wealth, and goodness, and the *rasas* that can conform to such a conclusion are only the Erotic and the Heroic. The consideration that the hero must be exalted and flawless rules out the possibility of other *rasas* playing a dominant role. It follows that the pathetic emotions can only appear as subordinate in such a play. The hero's suffering has to be, in the nature of things, both transitory and heroic.

Bharata's formulae were adopted wholesale by literary theorists like Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin in their definitions of *mahākāvyas* or epics. Surely, they had before them the

great epics of Vyāsa and Vālmīki, and it is not much to expect that their definitions should be applicable to these two works at least. They lay down in general terms that the epic should provide scope for *all* the *rasas*, and that unity of action must be secured by observing the fivefold division of the plot laid down by Bharata. They mention that the heroes must be dignified and noble, virtuous and successful.[1] The need for a single dominant *rasa* in a work as a whole which is implied by Bharata, if implied at all, is not noticed by these theorists. We can, of course, take each canto as a unit and point to one or the other *rasa*. But what about the *rasa* permeating the epic as a whole?

At this point Ānandavardhana comes forward with his facile answer. He examines the beginning, middle and end of the two Sanskrit epics—a procedure impeccable, no doubt—and comes to the conclusion that the Pathetic[2] is the dominant *rasa* of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, as the Tranquil is that of the *Mahābhārata*. This conclusion deserves some consideration here.

From what we have seen of Bharata's rules, it stands out that neither the Pathetic nor the Tranquil can figure as a prominent *rasa* in a drama. Since the same considerations are applicable to the epic, *mutatis mutandis*, we become hesitant in going with Ānandavardhana the whole way. When we remember that the Tranquil was most

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[1] Bhāmaha, in particular, emphasizes the demands of "poetic justice" in the "logic of poetry" by branding the breach of this rule as a grave defect called "*pratijñā-hīna*" (*Kāvyālaṁkāra*, Ch.V).

[2] The word "Pathetic" is not used here in the the sense meant by Aristotle when he divides epics into "ethical" and "pathetic". In his sense all emotions may be "pathetic."

probably a late interpolation into Bharata's original scheme of eight *rasas,* our misgivings increase. Intrinsically considered, the premises of Ānandavardhana in characterizing the *Mahābhārata* as a *mokṣa-śāstra* or a "treatise on emancipation," on the one hand, and an epic poem permeated with the Tranquil *rasa* on the other, are not above cavil. No one will deny that there is both poetry and philosophy in this epic. But when we are to rate it as poetry, we should not mix up our evaluation of it as poetry with our evaluation of it as philosophy. Ānandavardhana wants us to believe that poetry and philosophy are inextricably intertwined in the epic, and therefore, that the *mokṣa-śanta* equation is the only solution of the problem. But, once again, one might feel that in the voluminous epic poetry and philosophy rarely run into each other, barring stray exceptions like the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. The poetic part is clearly distinguishable from the philosophical part; and the former turns round the heroism of warring heroes. The ruling passion of the epic *qua* poetry would then be the Heroic (*Vīra*), not the Tranquil (*Śanta*).

Nor is Ānandavardhana's conclusion about the *Rāmāyaṇa* grounded on any firmer foundation. No one can gainsay the fact that Rāma, the hero, is primarily heroic, heroic even in his sufferings. Bhavabhūti could designate him a *mahāvīra* or a mighty hero. The theory of critics is faced with a baffling problem in the most unexpected unhappy ending of the epic. If the ending is really unhappy, then the very first rule of the Indian theorists is broken and the intended instruction from the poem, acknowledged by all critics, becomes a myth. If an ideal hero like Rāma ended his career in frustration and sorrow, then why should anybody emulate him at all in his virtue?

That is a question which would readily occur to the traditional Indian mind, strange though it might appear today.

There are only two ways out of the dilemma. The first is to say that poets have their licences (*niraṅkuśāḥ kavayaḥ*) and that critical theory may require readjusting in the light of this. Then, the *rasa* of the *Rāmāyaṇa* may perhaps be the pathetic (*Karuṇa*). Ānandavardhana has adopted this course. The other is to deny the genuineness of the text, or the real intent of the "*Uttarakāṇḍa*" (or the last canto) of the epic, in which the tragic twist is given. Bhavabhūti in the *Uttararāmacharita* chose to adopt this course and gives us an inset play from his own imagination as the original work of Vālmīki, the tragic close of which, once again, is made, by an adroit dramatic device, to serve the purpose of a happy ending to the main play. He has killed two birds with one stone here—avoiding the unwanted tragic close and, at the same time, releasing the *rasa* of *Adbhuta* or Wonder, as laid down by Bharata. But the problem we are considering gets most tangled when we find Bhavabhūti himself suggesting through a character in Act III of his play that *Karuṇa* is the ruling *rasa* throughout, manifesting itself through multiple forms. Most critics are wont to regard this as the playwright's analysis of his entire play. But, at least in the bouts of fighting between the young heroes stretching over two acts (IV and V) the thread of this *rasa* gets very thin indeed, and one is almost tempted to believe that, after all, the scope of Bhavabhūti's side-remark is confined to Act III, wherein alone Rāma's sorrow overflows without let or hindrance. We have hints, but no direct glimpses, of Rāma's agony in any other act. Indeed, many of the ancient commentators

themselves prefer to take up this second stand and regard the ruling *rasa* of the play to be a variety of the Heroic (*Vīra*).

Modern scholarship has done a great service to the literary critic in proving that the "*Uttarakāṇḍa*" of the *Rāmāyaṇa* is a later appendage to Vālmīki's composition. But, though later than Vālmīki, it must have been earlier than Kālidāsa, who refers to its story, and our inquiry therefore is not entirely useless. Both Bhavabhūti and Ānandavardhana are referring to the Rāmāyaṇa *with* its "*Uttarakāṇḍa*".

The main point at issue is whether Ānandavardhana has rightly interpreted the spirit of the *Rāmāyaṇa* in regarding *Karuṇa* as its prominent *rasa*. We have seen that the Sanskrit conception of literature, emphasizing the reward of virtue, does not allow room for the hero's failure or frustration. Is it a feeling of good over evil we get prominently in the epic, or a sense of the unrewarded suffering of the good? Do Rāma and Sītā represent for us models of heroic duty and feminine fortitude or just objects of pity? If our answer is the latter, we are almost accepting the practical success of Rāvaṇa, the embodiment of evil, in inflicting irrevocable sorrow on Rāma and Sītā; and this gives the lie to the very credo of success as the core of ethics.[3] The present writer feels that the greatness of Rāma and Sītā stands out not so much in their passive sorrow as in their positive heroism in the midst of sorrow. No one can deny the presence of sorrow and suffering in the epic in

[3] This corresponds to rewards promised by religion to the virtuous and perhaps points to the religious background of ancient Indian literary criticism.

a large measure. But one might say that the emphasis of the poet is not sorrow but on the heroic attitude to sorrow. That indeed is the secret of all great tragedies; and this approach will make of Rāma almost a tragic hero, though apparently Ānandavardhana's stand might seem to do so more naturally. It is not the isolated unhappy ending alone which contributes to the tragic atmosphere; more so does the spirit of undaunted courage in facing sorrow.

Among *rasas,* the closest approximations to the tragic emotions usually suggested are *Karuṇa* and *Raudra.* No doubt, Pity and Terror are best translated by these terms. But there appears to be a fundamental confusion in the equation of pity with *Karuṇa* and fear with *Raudra.* While "Pity" and "Fear" are emotions in the process of "catharsis" or purgation or purification, leading to the state of "calm, all passion spent" in the spectator, our *Karuṇa Rasa* and *Raudra Rasa* are aesthetic experiences in their purified state. *Rasa* is the name of that state of mind which represents the very last stage in the interplay of various moods, emotions and other responses. But pity and fear represent only earlier stages in the spectator's response, corresponding more or less to our *sthāyibhāvs,* and not his final state of mind. If the excited state itself of pity and terror is to be termed *rasa* in a loose way, then our *Karuṇa* and *Raudra Rasas* would more closely approximate to the effects of sentimental sorrow or sensational fury in melodramas than to their counterparts in great tragedies, where characterization plays a greater role. It follows, then, that the nearest approximation to the "tragic" experience will, if anything, be a gamut of *Vīrarasa.*

If we understand that in the *Rāmāyaṇa* the poet's emphasis is on the hero's stern sense of duty amidst trials

and tribulations that might have unnerved another of a weaker fibre, the poet's natural ending of the story would be a trial, perhaps the greatest trial, that ever man faced. Such is the episode of the banishment of Sītā culminating in her descent to the Netherworld. On this view, the *rasa* can be described as that variety of the Heroic known as *Dharmavīra* (Heroic-in-Duty).

Ānandavardhana has chosen to regard the episode of the hunter and the bird as the *significant* begining in the epic. Here agian, he appears to have followed a wrong trail. The natural beginning of the epic is the account of Ayodhyā, and the incident of the bird is no more than a prelude.

Our discussion has shown that *rasa* as a canon of literary criticism is far from dependable in the estimation of epics of vast proportions. Perhaps it is unnecessary. The only theorist that has attempted it, Ānandavardhana, misses his mark more than once. In the determination of the ruling passion of a work—epic or dramatic—considerations of character should assume at least as much importance as consideration of plot. Ānandavardhana has confined himself to the latter to the neglect of the former; and one cannot say that even in an epic the story alone is exclusively important. Nor are attempts to appreciate stray verses from epics or plays in terms of *rasa* likely to be very successful, inasmuch as *rasa* relates mainly to the unity of emotion or tone instanced in a whole work in the midst of a variety of moods and feelings. In the estimation of dramatic literature, however it may be of help if we keep the above in mind. But its greatest applicability is in the evaluation of lyrics; and the credit of having pointed this out should go to Ānandavardhana. But he could not

heard any "romantic revival" in Sanskrit, and the pure lyrical form never found congenial soil for full-blooded growth. There are lyric elements in our epic and dramatic literature; they find greater expression in our epigrams (*muktaka* or *anibaddha*);[4] and they are strikingly present in poems like the *Meghadūta* and the *Gītagovinda*. But even these last are not unalloyed lyrics, like those of Shelley or Keats. There is a tendency on the part of the poet to view the subject-matter objectively—as existing outside and apart from his personality—and not subjectivly—that is, primarily as a personal experience. Kālidāsa and Jayadeva will give vent to the emotions of a Yakṣa or a Rādhā instead of their own.[5] The intrusion of didactic and narrative elements mars the pure lyrical quality of even Bhartṛhari's verses and the very best lyrics of love in Sanskrit, like those of Amaru, become sensuous to a degree because of the formal and rigid categories of *rasa* theorists who enumerated types of heroes and heroines in love.[6] The classical theory of *rasa* practically fails to leave the poet a free choice in the expression of his emotions and feelings in spite of its assertions that he is freer than God Himself in the creative realm. Even theorists who put *rasa* on a par with Absolute Bliss (*Brahmānanda*) are

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[4] This is inclusive of forms of irony and satire as in the case of "*Anyokti*" (Indirect Address.)

[5] These may perhaps come close to the "Ode" and Idyll" recognized as English lyrical types, and admitting of a certain amount of objectivity in the poet and a thin thread of narration.

[6] None of these can be really equated with the type of "Song" in English literature because of their conscious artistry and limited range of feelings conveyed.

often found illustrating it with sensuous verses. The paucity of lyrical types and lyric output in Sanskrit is itself an index of the limitations of the *rasa* theory.

Rasa, then, cannot serve as a sole canon of Sanskrit literary criticism. It needs to be supplemented by the more serviceable criteria of *Guṇa-Rīti* (Qualities and Poetic Diction and Style) and *Alaṅkāra* (Figurative Imagery).[7] We have refrained here from entering into niceties raised about *rasa* by commentators of Bharata's text because they are mostly abstract and metaphysical considerations valuable for theory, but of little use for practical criticism.

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[7] A consideration of these we reserve for treatment in another article.

VIII

THE RIDDLE OF RASA IN SANSKRIT POETICS

Rasa is one of those words in Sanskrit whose precise significance is as indefinite as its usage is wide-spread.[1] In the history of Sanskrit poetics, perhaps no other concept has given rise to so much controversy. Even Jagannātha, the redoubtable author of *Rasagaṅgādhara,* who tries to review in detail the diverse shades of expert opinion centring round *Rasa*, is driven to confess at the end that the only common point that emerges is '*Rasa* is felt as that which is invariably connected with the highest joy and partaking of beauty in the world.'[2] The classical interpre-

[1] In the Vedic literature '*Rasa*' (from √ *ras* 'to taste') means 'taste', 'sweet juice', 'sap' or 'essence'. *Cf.*

(i) पावमानीर्यो अध्येत्यृषिभिः संभृतं रसम् । तस्मै सरस्वती दुहे क्षीरं सर्पिर्मधूदकम् ॥—*Ṛgveda*, IX. 67. 32.

(ii) यो वः शिवतमो रसः —*Ibid.* X. 9. 2

(iii) रसो वै मधु —*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa,* VI. iv. 3-2-7.

(iv) प्राणो वा अङ्गानां रसः —*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad,* 1-3-19.

(v) पुरुषस्य वाग्रसः —*Chāndōgya Upaniṣad,* 1-1-2

(vi) रसो वै सः —*Taittirīya Upaniṣad.* 2-7-1.

The word '*Śṛṅgāra*' as a *Rasa* is not found in Vedic literature and the early *Upaniṣads.* It first occurs in a later *Upaniṣad,* viz., *Sāmarahasya* (Adyar ed.) 234 : 12; 243 : 1; etc.; the old meaning of *rasa* is clear in epic literature also.

Cf. रसोऽहमप्सु कौन्तेय —*Gitā* VII. 8.

[2] *Cf.* इत्थं नानाजातीयाभिः शेमुषीभिर्नानारूपतयावसितोऽपि मनीषिभिः परमाल्हादाविनाभावितया प्रतीयमानः प्रपञ्चेऽस्मिन् रमणीयतामावहतीति निर्विवादम् । *op. cit.* p. 35 (*N. S. P. Ed.*).

tations of Bharata's famous *Rasa-sūtra* by Lollaṭa, Śaṅkuka, Bhaṭṭanāyaka and Abhinavagupta have been critically examined by modern scholars more than once.[3] The idea seems to be well nigh established now that the great dividing line between the old *(prācīna)* and new *(navya)* schools of Sanskrit Poetics is the attitude towards *Rasa* either as *vācya* or *vyaṅgya*.[4] On the testimony of Ānandavardhana, Abhinavagupta and Ruyyaka, it is assumed that all the ancients like Bhāmaha, Daṇḍin and Udbhaṭa who regard *rasavad*, etc.,[5] as *alaṅkāras* on a par with *upamā*, etc., imply that *Rasas* are *vācyopaskāraka* and not *vyaṅgya* aroused for the first time in the appreciative critic. After Abhinavagupta, Prof. M. Hiriyanna interprets the word *Rasa* as 'integral aesthetic experience' *(akhaṇḍacarvaṇā)* and says—'According to this explanation, then, emotions are not communicated at all by the poet; he only suggests them and thereby helps their waking to life in the mind of a competent person when they will necessarily be experienced by him'.[6] This statement which has the support of modern psychology also, may be a correct picture of Abhinavagupta's theory; but whether this was also the view of Bharata who propounded the *Rasa* theory and Ānandavardhana who formulated the

[3] *Vide*—(i) Dr. S. K. De: *A. Mookerjee Silver Jubilee Commemoration Volume*, III. pp. 207-253. (ii) Dr. P. V. Kane: *History of Sanskrit Poetics.* (iii) P. Panchapagesa Sastri: *The Philosophy of Aesthetic Pleasure.* (iv) Prof. T. N. Srikantaiya: ಭಾರತೀಯ ಕಾವ್ಯ ಮೀಮಾಂಸೆ.

[4] *Vide*—Prof. M. Hiriyanna: *The Problem of the Rasavadalaṅkāra*, P. O. C. XVI Session, pp. 267-70.

[5] i.e., *Preyas, Ūrjasvin, Samāhita,* and *Bhāvika.*

[6] Prof. M. Hiriyanna, *loc. cit.* p. 269.

principle of *dhvani* is a question which needs to be examined further. An attempt is made in the sequel to go into this question and also the related question about the view of the ancients regarding the place of *Rasa* in poetry. It will be seen that there is no break in tradition regarding *Rasa* on the part of the ancients like Bhāmaha and that their idea of *alaṅkāra*—synonymous with *saundaryaprakāra* or *śobhākaradharma* in the words of Daṇḍin (II. 1)—is much wider than is generally acknowledged.

I

We have the direct testimony of all the ancients—Bhāmaha, Daṇḍin and Vāmana to the effect that they have read the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. While admitting drama as a form of literature, they refrain from going into its details since these can be studied best in Bharata's great work.[7] In forms other than drama also they declare in unambiguous terms that great works (i. e., *Mahākāvyas*) must be full of *Rasas* and *Bhāvas* and must have well-knit themes in conformity with Bharata's principle of *sandhis*.[8] Is this not an open admission of the primary importance of the *Rasa* principle in poetry? A reading of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* will show that Bharata never indulges in metaphysical discussions about the aesthetic response of the man of taste. In the only passage[9] he devotes to the qualities of the ideal spectators *(prekṣakas)*, he refrains in fact from using the words *Rasa* and *Bhāva*. He speaks of the ideal spectator as one who is

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[7] *Cf. Kāvyālaṅkāra,* I. 24; *Kāvyādarśa* I. 31 and *Kavyālaṅkāra-sūtravṛtti* I. 3. 30-32.

[8] *Cf. Kāvyālaṅkāra,* I. 20-1; *Kāvyādarśa,* I. 18.

[9] *Viz.,* Ch. 27 (N. S. P. Edn.).

happy at the sight of happiness, suffering at the sight of grief and full of pity at the sight of the piteous.[10] This is what later writers call *hṛdaya-saṁvāda* or *varṇanīya-viṣaya-tanmayībhāvanayogyatā* or emotional sensitivity. Bharata recognises how it varies from individual to individual. He says that drama must please all tastes, the illiterate and the learned, the wealth-seeker and the world-weary, the heroic and the old. So it is that drama is meant for all sorts of characters, high as well as low, young as well as old, male as well as female.[11] It will be seen that Kālidāsa is only echoing Bharata when he says—*nāṭyaṁ bhinnarucerjanasya bahudhāpyekaṁ samāradhākaṁ* ('even to men of myriad tastes, drama doth provide joy').[12] With Bharata's text

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[10] यस्तुष्टे तुष्टिमायाति शोके शोकमुपैति च । दैन्ये दीनत्वमभ्येति स नाट्ये प्रेक्षकः स्मृतः ॥ XXVII. 52. *Op. cit.*

[11] ....उत्तमाधममध्यानां वृद्धबालकयोषिताम् । तुष्यन्ति तरुणाः कामे विदग्धाः समयान्विते ॥

अर्थेष्वर्थपराश्चैव मोक्षे वाथ विरागिणः ॥ शूरा बीभत्सरौद्रेषु नियुद्धेष्वाहवेषु च । धर्माख्यानपुराणेषु वृद्धास्तुष्यन्ति सर्वदा ॥ *Ibid.* 56. 8.

We see here the interest of spectators being grounded on the four values of life (*puruṣārthas*), a point utilized by *Ālankārikas* also *Cf.* Udbhaṭa's *Kāvyālaṅkārasaṅgraha:—*

चतुर्वर्गैतरौ प्राप्य परिहार्यौ क्रमाद्यतः । चैतन्यभेदादास्वाद्यात् स रसस्तादृशो मतः ॥ IV. 5.

This clearly gives the reason why *Sṛṅgāra* and *Vīra* alone appeal to the audience as ruling sentiments. The reason is that they inspire *kāma* and *artha* respectively—two values universal to men. Didactic poems inspiring *dharma* and *mokṣa* can only have sectional appeal. That is why *Śāntarasa* had no importance in secular poems though it was holding sway in didactic epics.

[12] *Mālavikāgnimitra,* Act. I.

before us, we would not be justified in concluding that the nature of the joy provided is of the same kind for everyone. The conclusion reached is that Bharata does not give[13] the name *Rasa* or *Bhāva* to the entertainment *(ārādhanā* or *ānanda* or *āsvāda)* which a play provides for an audience.

What then is *Rasa* according to Bharata? Kalidāsa's summary of Bharata's views given above is once again helpful. It is the emotional element in the theme or plot of drama which falls into an organised pattern. In life too we have the interplay of several emotions; but they do not fall into any pattern; they are disorganised. The chaotic interplay of emotions in the world never brings exclusive joy because the emotions in life are guided by the wayward elements of *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* which are always at loggerheads. Into the space of a single moment are packed various activities very often arising out of clashing desires and conflicting emotions. It is impossible to name one single ruling passion as the source of all our activities of even a single day, not to speak of our whole lives. The imagination of the playwright brings law and order into this lawless assemblage of indiscriminate diversity. It keeps out the incoherent elements and picks out only the

[13] Nor does Kālidāsa. The expression *hṛdayasamvādi* is used by Bharata himself as an adjective to *artha* or artistic matter in explaining how *bhāvas* become *rasas* when universalised therein:

योऽर्थः हृदयसंवादी तस्य भावो रसोद्भवः ।
शरीरं व्याप्यते तेन शुष्कं काष्ठमिवाग्निना ॥ —VII. 7 *Nāṭya Śāstra*

Dr. Manomohan Ghosh's translation reads: 'The state proceeding from the thing which is congenial to the heart is the source of the sentiment and it pervades the body just as fire spreads over the dry wood.' But Abhinavagupta appears to take this as an indication of the ideal spectator. *Cf. Dhvanyālokalocana*, P. 78, (KSRI Edn).

emotions, primary and derivative (*sthāyi*-and *vyabhicāri-bhāvas*), their causes—human and material (*vibhāvas*)—and their effects (*anubhāvas*) for representation. The emotions thus sorted out by the poet become elemental or universal and shed their individualistic peculiarities. It is in this sense that Bharata and Kālidāsa speak of drama as an ideal representation of the world's *bhāvas*.[14] The primary emotions (*bhāvas*) are called *sthāyi* and are distingushed from emotions which are fleeting or *vyabhicāri*. Since the former alone are conducive to unity and development, they get the name of *Rasa* when such unity has been achieved in a play through the organic arrangement or successful fusion into an artistic unity of their causes and effects.[15] This cannot be done in thin air. This has to be achieved through all the media at the disposal of the dramatist. So the characters in a drama will fall into certain definite types in relation to *Rasa*[16]; the plot will have links (*sandhis*) wherein each part will form an organic element of the whole. Metre and music, dance and gesture, voice and tone, dress and make-up are all directed to achieve this *Rasa*. The unity of *Rasa* in a drama does not warrant the exclusion of all other

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[14] *Cf.* लोकवृत्तानुकरणं नाटयमेतन्मया कृतम् —Bharata, 1. 112; and त्रैलोक्यस्यास्य सर्वस्यं नाटयं भावानुकीर्तनम् —I. 107. The word *anukaraṇa* shows that only emotion idealized by the poet is meant and not his *felt* emotion. *Cf.* Aristotle's idea of mimesis.

[15] *Cf.* एवमेते स्थायिनो भावा रससंज्ञाः प्रत्यवगन्तव्याः —*Ibid.* VII P. 112. and......स्थायी भावो रसनाम लभते —P. 107.

For a fuller idea, read the English translation of *Nāṭyaśāstra* by Dr. Manomohan Ghosh. Ch. VI and VII.

[16] *Cf.* *nāyikā-nāyaka-bhedas.*

Rasas. On the other hand it implies the inclusion of diverse *Rasas* since unity does not mean just uniformity. But even in the delineation of subordinate *Rasas* (*aṅgarasas*), the law of propriety must be scrupulously observed. Mutually opposite *Rasas* like *hāsya* and *karuṇa* cannot be placed side by side. No *aṅgarasa* (even if *aviruddha* or unopposed) should be over-developed. And of all the *Rasas*, *śṛṅgāra* and *vīra* have the greatest popularity and have the best claims for being *aṅgirasa* (ruling sentiment). This is the barest summary of Bharata's rules about *Rasa*, rules which are scattered all over his *Nāṭyaśāstra*. While determining the meaning of his famous *Rasa-sūtra*, this background must be kept in mind. When torn out of the context, the *sūtra* may be interpreted to yield any meaning one likes.

Now it is pretty clear that Bharata is formulating all these rules solely for the guidance of the artists—playwright or actor or both—and not for the education of the spectators, who, he assumes, have the necessary sensibility or taste. He has not said anywhere about *Rasa* or *bhāva* as arising first in the spectator; but on the other hand he has underlined throughout that the poet should observe certain rules in view of *Rasa*. He has not said that 'emotions are not communicated at all by the poet;' on the other hand, he indicates throughout that the poet's only task is to communicate *Rasa* as understood by him. All the media described at length—music, metre, language, gesture, voice etc.,—are nothing if not aids to this communication by the artist. When the rules of propriety (*aucitya*) mentioned above are neglected by the poet, there is *rasabhaṅga* because communication has failed.

If we thus analyse Bharata's rules objectively and realise that *Rasa* is the primary concern of the poet and

that it is achieved by a systematic effort on his part in different directions, we will be in a position to understand his *sūtra* clearly. In Bharata's psychological classification all possible emotions of man are brought under 49 heads of which the first 8 (*rati* etc.,) are permanent, the next 33 (*nirveda* etc.,) are fleeting and the last 8 (*stambha* etc.,) are involuntary and psychophysical. All these are *bhāvas* or states of mind (*citta-vṛtti-viśeṣa*). Of these the first 8 alone have the possibility of being treated at length as ruling passions of diverse situations, antecedent and consequent. When so treated the *sthāyibhāvas* themselves are described as *Rasa* because then their appeal to the audience is certain. Though it is an undisputed fact that *sahṛdayas* also possess these *stāyibhāvas* and that is why they can have *hṛdayasaṁvāda* and consequent *āsvāda* or *ānanda*, Bharata is not intent on explaining that point. What he wishes to explain is that without an artistic and systematic representation of *vibhāvas* etc., which he also calls *artha* (see note 13), no *Rasa* is possible; and without *Rasas* the artistic attempt is as good as useless (*nahi rasādṛte kaścidarthaḥ pravartate*). If *Rasa* is kept steadily in view, then all his other rules relating to it become indispensable. The *sūtra* says that by *vibhāvānubhāvavyabhicārisaṁyoga Rasa* is called forth; or as explained by Bharata himself later, *sthāyibhāvas* come to be called *Rasa*. But how the *saṁyoga* is to be effected is not explained in the *sūtra*. It is the subject of the whole treatise, and it is the observance of these rules that makes a theorist a supporter of Bharata's doctrine of *Rasa*.

II

So the question boils down to this: Did Bhāmaha, Daṇḍin, Vāmana and Udbhaṭa openly recognise the canons

of *Rasa* as enunciated by Bharata? If the answer is 'yes', they must all have realised the supreme importance of *Rasa* in poetry. No verdict of any later writer can change that position. Considered in this light, all the ancient writers will be found to be adherents of Bharata's Rasa School. Bhāmaha says in no ambiguous words that a *mahākāvya* should contain "noble characters and incidents like state-discussions, marching armies and the hero's success; its story will have the five *sandhis* and it will not be recondite; it will be grand in scale and though all the four *puruṣārthas* (human values) are conveyed, the primary place is that of *artha* or worldly good. It will represent the way of the world and delineate each one of the *Rasas*".[17] Are these not rules of Bharata himself, with just a few modifications to suit poetry, the literary form in question? These occur at the very beginning of his work and show that Bhāmaha was perfectly alive to the demands of *Rasa* in poetry. Similarly, Daṇḍin also echoes Bhāmaha in the beginning of his *Kāvyādarśa* and his expression *rasabhāvanirantaraṁ* points to the fact that he wanted the whole work to be permeated by *Rasa*.[18] Vāmana admits that drama is literature *par excellence;* and regards *Rasa* as a *guṇa* of *artha* or poetic content; something more than a mere ornament (*alaṅkāra*)

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[17] *Vide*— ....सदाश्रयम् ॥

मन्त्रदूतप्रयाणाजिनायकाभ्युदयैश्च यत् ।
पञ्चभिः सन्धिभिर्युक्तं नातिव्याख्येयमृद्धिमत् ।
चतुर्वर्गाभिधानेऽपि भूयसार्थोपदेशकृत् ।
युक्तं लोकस्वभावेन रसैश्च सकलैः पृथक् ॥ *Kāvyālaṅkāra, I. 19-21.*

[18] I. 31. *Loc. cit.*

in its restricted sense[19] as distinct from its wider meaning is also noted by him at the very commencement of his work, that *alaṅkāra* is a synonym of *saundarya* (beauty).

All the ancient literary theorists are thus agreed on the fact that rules relating to *Rasa* though formulated by Bharata specifically for drama, deserve the study of poets too for endowing their works with charm. This implies that the total effect of a long poem like an epic (*mahākāvya*) is to be measured only in terms of *Rasa*. But so far as the smaller units of the poem are concerned, their beauty is enriched by a number of *alaṅkāras*. Underlying all these *alaṅkāras*, there is the imaginative element or creative element (called *vakrokti* by Bhāmaha and *atiśayokti* by Daṇḍin).[20] The poet's imagery in the different units of the poem has a charm all its own and even when these are absent, if the *Rasa* element is strong enough, charm is not absent. Then the *kāvya* will be only *rasavad* and if it is not a heightened *rasa* like *sṛṅgāra,* but only an agreeable *bhāva* or emotion like *rati* in relation to gods etc., or *harṣa* (joy), it is *preyasvat*. If it is a spirited sentiment, it is *ūrjasvin*.

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[19] *Cf.* दीप्तरसत्वं कान्तिः *Kāvyālaṅkārasūtravṛtti*, III. ii. 14; काव्यस्य शोभायाः कर्तारो धर्मा गुणाः ; तदतिशयहेतवस्त्वलङ्काराः *Ibid.* III. i. 1-2 and सौन्दर्यमलङ्कारः I. i. 2. Rudraṭa is not taken into consideration because he openly gives the highest place to *Rasa* in poetry throughout his work.

[20] Daṇḍin also calls it *Vakrokti* in *Kāvyādarśa,* II. 362. It should be throughout observed that the ancients never regard anything which is devoid of the imaginative element as *artha* or *kāvyārtha*.

The fall of an emotion is *samāhita*.[21] All these are *alaṅkāras* of poetry in the sense that they happen to be the sources of charm even like *upamā* and so forth, because both are products of the poet's creative imagination *(kaviśakti)*. The word *alaṅkāra* in both Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin is used in the wider sense of *saundarya* only and it thus enables them to speak of *rasa, bhāva,* etc., as also *alaṅkāras* in the parts of a poem.[22] But this does not mean that they could not differentiate between the importance of the two since in poetry *Rasas* are expressly declared to be important.

Now we shall turn to Ānandavardhana's approach to the question. He brings to the fore for the first time the relation between the media of poetry—words and conventional meanings *(vākyārtha)*—and *rasa*. He finds that it can be at best indirect suggestion. Theoretically the conclusion is fool-proof since *Rasa* cannot be part of the conventional meaning of any of the aggregates or wholes that constitute a poem. He renders explicit what was only implicit in Bharata's discussions on *Rasa*. So far so good; but he takes all his predecessors to task for having laboured under a misconception that *Rasa*—which in its very nature can be

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[21] These are not recognised by Vāmana, because he uses the word *alaṅkāra* in the narrow sense as noted above. All these are concepts of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* which are assigned their place in poetry.

[22] *Cf.* [i] सैषा सर्वत्र वक्रोक्तिरनयार्थो विभाव्यते ।
यत्नोऽस्यां कविना कार्यः कोऽलङ्कारोऽनया विना ॥
Kāvyālaṅkāra II. 85.

[ii] यच्च सन्ध्यङ्गवृत्त्यङ्गलक्षणाद्यागमान्तरे ।
व्यावर्णितमिदं चेष्टमलङ्कारतयैव नः ॥ *Kāvyādarśa II. 366.*

The word *alaṅkāra* is used in its wider sense even by Bhoja. *Cf.* Dr. V. Raghavan's *Sṛṅgāra Prakāśa.*

nothing but *alaṅkārya* (what is embellished)—was just an *alaṅkāra* or an embellisher of *śabda* and *artha*. When he says this, the familiar words *artha* and *alaṅkara* are being used by Ānandavardhana in restricted senses possibly not intended by the ancients. To Ānandavardhana *artha* is mere dictionary-meaning; to the ancients it is the poetic content.[23] To Ānandavardhana *alaṅkāra* is *vācyopaskāraka* only; but to the ancients it is *saundarya* which may be *vyaṅgyopaskāraka* as well. Abhinavagupta lent his authority to Ānandavardhana; and Mammaṭa accepted the interpretation as correct. Ruyyaka in his *Alaṅkārasarvasva* accepts fully the stand of Ānandavardhana[24]; but in actual practice defines and illustrates *rasavadādi alaṅkāras* also unlike

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[23] Poetic content is to be distinguished from plain talk and scientific writing, both of which are strictly kept out of the sphere of poetry by the ancients as they are wanting in *vakrokti*, the *raison d'etre* of *alaṅkāra*. Ānandavardhana is equating it with them in his criticism.

Cf. "Poets write 'no language' or none that can be learned in advance of reading their poems. Being unique, poetic meaning necessarily works by departure from the expected sequence of normal spoken language. Not only is every trope such a departure but also every elaboration, reticence or conciseness; all that distinguishes poetry from ordinary talk." Prof. A.D.S. Fowler (Queen's College, Oxford) in *Essays in Criticism*, July, 1956, p. 355. This truth is as much in line with the ancient concept of *vakrokti* as the later theory of *dhvani*. There is no justification for regarding that *alaṅkāra* is just *vāgvikalpa* or turn of commonplace talk as Ānandavardhana holds. The poet's vision is indeed the sheet-anchor of the concept of *alaṅkāras* also. For a fuller discussion of the meaning of *artha*, see the present writer's '*Key-Terms in Sanskrit Literary Criticism*'.

[24] *Alaṅkārasarvasva*, Introductory section.

Mammaṭa who omits their consideration in strict conformity with Ānandvardhana's position. Ruyyaka's procedure is thus an indirect pointer to the fact that Ānandavardhana's explanation was not wholly acceptable to all critics.

Ānandavardhana has considered at length the ancient idea of *rasavadalaṅkāra* before dismissing it as unsound and revising it to suit his stand. The arguments reviewed in the *Dhvanyāloka* deserve greater attention than they have received so far at the hands of scholars. In the beginning of the II *Uddyota* he refers to two ideas of the ancients about the *rasavadalaṅkāra* :—

(i) Delineation of direct emotional behaviour in sentient beings; or

(ii) Delineation of emotional behaviour imputed to insentient beings.

According to Ānandavardhana the first alternative is untenable because it will rob or restrict the scope of other figures like simile inasmuch as the bulk of poetry relates to emotional behaviour of sentient beings; and a great part of poetry wherein emotional behaviour is imputed to insentient objects like hill and river will have to be branded as *nīrasa* (devoid of *rasa*). The second alternative is to be rejected because it strengthens the first reason already mentioned. Both these criticisms lose their force in view of the fact that the ancients recognise both *saṅkara* and *saṁsṛṣṭi* as *alaṅkāras*.

It is unfortunate that the reading of Bhāmaha's example of *rasavadalaṅkāra*[25] is hopelessly corrupt. Nothing can be made of it. But in *Bhaṭṭikāvya*[26] we get the follow-

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[25] देवी समागमद्धर्ममस्फरिण्यतिरोहिता—III. 6, *Loc. cit.*

[26] X. 48.

ing example of *rasavadalaṅkāra :*

ग्रहमणिरशनं दिवो नितम्बम्
विपुलमनुत्तमलब्धकान्तियोगम् ।
च्युतवनवसनं मनोऽभिरामं
शिखरकरैर्मृदनादिव स्पृशन्तम् ॥

Here the subject of description is a high mountain. The mountain is said to be a lover tenderly touching with his peak the comely and bright curves of the disrobed darling viz., Heaven, whose girdle is starry. Here we see erotic behavior imputed to the mountain, an insentient object. The commentary *Jayamaṅgalā* quotes Bhāmaha's definition of *rasavadalaṅkāra* in this connection. This confirms the conclusion that Ānandavardhana had before him some such definite view of *Rasavadalaṅkāra* which he sets out to refute.

It remains to be considered whether Ānandavardhana's rejection of the title *rasavad* for such examples is strictly warranted by his theory of *dhvani*. Ānandavardhana himself has given three similar examples—two are from Kālidāsas' *Vikramorvaśiya* in this context[27]—and says that they are treasure-houses of *Rasa* (*rasanidhānabhūta*). According to the narrow view of *Rasavadalaṅkāra* attributed by Ānandavardhana to ancients, these will not be *rasavad* but *nīrasa*. But we have seen from Bhaṭṭi that they did include such instances also under *rasavadalaṅkāra* itself. The

[27] तन्वी मेघजलार्द्र . . . and तरङ्गभ्रूभङ्ग . . .

See the present writer's English Translation of *Dhvanyāloka* (Poona Oriental Series, p. 22-25). According to Ānandavardhana, *Rasavadalaṅkāra* is instanced only when one *Rasa* is subordinate to another in a single passage. This idea in itself shows that the reader's *āsvāda* is far from being intended.

position of the ancients has been narrowed down by Ānandavardhana to suit his stand here also. Even granting for argument's sake that he has not distorted the older notion of *rasavadalaṅkāra*, can we say that Ānandavardhana is justified in regarding these as examples of *rasa-dhvani?* That Ānandavardhana is innocently trapped into a self-contradiction here will be evident by comparing his earlier remarks about *samāsokti* which is only a *guṇībhūta-vyaṅgya-alaṅkāra* according to him and not *rasa-dhvani*. The example cited for *samāsokti* also is very similar to the ones we have been considering:

उपोढरागेण विलोलतारकं
तथा गृहीतं शशिना निशामुखम् ।
यथा समस्तं तिमिरांशुकं तया
पुरोपि रागाद् गलितं न लक्षितम् ॥

Here, according to Ānandavardhana, what is of primary importance is the *vācya*, viz., the moonlit night as the subject of description and erotic behaviour is imputed to it through *śleṣa* which only adds to the beauty of the *vācya*. This same argument can very well be advanced in the case of the instances cited earlier. The line of demarcation between them is far too slender; and if *samāsokti* is just an *alaṅkāra*, imputed sentient behaviour of insentient objects too (*acetane cetanavṛttāntayojanā*) can only be an *alaṅkāra* even according to Ānandavardhana himself who has admitted more than once[28] that *alaṅkāras* which are *guṇibhūtavyaṅgya*

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[28] See *Dhvanyāloka*, III. 34, 35, 36, 37 & 39. *Kārika* 40 says that from the stand-point of *Rasa*, *guṇibhūta-vyaṅgya* too will become *dhvani* only. This shift of standpoint is very tricky. According to Daṇḍin, the *cetanatvāropa* on *acetanas* is *samādhiguṇa* which is praised by him as the mainstay of poets. *Cf.* *Kāvyādarśa*, II. 98-100.

are no less beautiful than *dhvani-kāvya*. But in *samāsokti* Anandavardhana conveniently forgets that *nāyikā-nāyaka-vyavahāra* involves *rasābhivyakti* which he brings to the fore in *acetane cetanavṛttāntayojanā*. From this we conclude that Ānandavardhana's attitude towards *Rasa* changes when he is criticising the ancients for their mistake in considering an *alaṅkārya as alaṅkāra*. In his own example of *samāsokti* he says not a word about *Rasa* while in similar examples of *acetane cetanavṛttānta-yojanā* he sees nothing but *Rasa*.

Now we come to the crux of the problem. According to Ānandavardhana *Rasa* is only *vyaṅgya;* and when it is intended as important by the poet it should be termed only *Dhvani* and not *alaṅkāra* in its narrow sense of *vācyopaskāraka*. We have seen that the ancients too lay down that the importance of *Rasa* should be kept steadily before his mind by the poet and even when *alaṅkāras* like *upamādi* are absent, *Rasas* and *bhāvas* might partake of charm and get the name of *alaṅkāra* in the larger sense. When one considers a poem from the standpoint of *Rasa*, it will always be *rasavad*, etc., according to the ancients[29] or *rasādi-dhvani* in the language of Ānandavardhana. Stated thus, the whole controversy appears just a quarrel over words. But it is much more than that. Ānandavardhana endeavours to show that the poet's activity (*vyāpāra*) must

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[29] *Cf.* [i] अहृद्यमसुनिर्भेदं रसवत्त्वेऽप्यपेशलम् ।
काव्यं कपित्थमामं च केषाञ्चित् सदृशं यथा ।
Kāvyālaṅkāra, V, 62.

[ii] अस्पृष्टबन्धलालित्यमपेतं रसवत्तया ।
न तत्काव्यमिति ग्राम्यं केवलं कटु कर्णयोः ॥
Jinasena. *Mahāpurāṇa*, I. 97.

primarily concern itself with *Rasa* and only secondarily with *alaṅkāras*. More explicitly than the ancients, he has referred to each rule of Bharata regarding *Rasa* and pointed out its application in literary works. In the circumstances, the difference between the ancients and Ānandavardhana ceases to be a difference in doctrine but amounts to only a difference in the degree of emphasis on *Rasa*. Leaving out the logical implications of the *dhvani* theory, if we confine our attention to this difference in emphasis on *Rasa* between the ancients and Ānandavardhana, we find that the ancients spoke of *Rasa* mainly with reference to composite works (*prabandha*); and for all manifestations of *Rasa*, *bhāva* etc., in component parts of a work they devised the figures like *rasavad*. For short *cāṭus* or *muktakas* (self-contained stanzas) though brimming with emotion, the ancients would appear to deny the full-fledged name *Rasa*; they account for their charm through *alaṅkāras* like *preyas* and *ūrjasvin*. Ānandavardhana on the other hand goes the whole length and says that there is as much *Rasa* in a part of a work as in a *cāṭu* or *muktaka*,[30] and that all *bhāvas* etc., are more charming than *upamā* etc. This is the real difference between the two view points. As we have already seen, Bharata's rules of *Rasa* have in mind only the plan of a whole work and it is difficult to imagine that he would have quoted any single stanza out of a whole drama as exemplifying this or that *Rasa* or accepted that *bhāvas*, etc., had an independent status equal to that of *Rasa*. At the most he would say that there was a touch of *Rasa* or

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[30] *Dhvanyāloka*, *vṛtti* on III. 7. But Abhinavagupta himself admits in his *Abhinavabhāratī* that *Rasas* are possible only in *prabandhas* and not in *muktakas*. *Cf*. V. Raghavan, *Śṛṅgāra Prakāśa*. p. 79.

rasavattva therein. Viewed in this light, even Vāmana's procedure of counting *dīpta-rasas* as a quality (*guṇa*) of *artha* or *kāvyārtha* as a whole, acquires significance. This attitude of the ancients points to a period in the history of Sanskrit Poetry when *prabandhas* were held in higher esteem than *muktakas*. But by Ānandavardhana's time Amaru and others had made this *genre* most popular and Ānandavardhana had no hesitation in giving them the highest status. It appears to the present writer that the grammatico-philosophical discussions of *dhvani* are primarily directed towards this end. In this process of enlarging the scope of *Rasa* to include *muktakas* and individual parts of a whole work, the word *Rasa* has been given a restricted meaning perhaps not contemplated by Bharata. It is only in this restricted sense *Rasa* can be a *vyaṅgya* and not a *vācyopaskāraka*. But in the original unrestricted sense of *Rasa*, it could be *vyaṅgya* only from a whole work; and in its parts it could only be a *vācyopaskāraka,* since the *vācya* was the poetic theme of the work as a whole, which it embellished. Herein lies the key to the riddle of *Rasa.*

Ānandavardhana was content only with enlarging the scope of *Rasa* to include parts of a work and *muktakas.* He did not attempt any philosophical justification of his position. But Abhinavagupta who was more of an original thinker than a commentator, gave the philosophical justification by equating *Rasa* with the critic's *akhaṇḍānanda,* which is nothing but a burst of innate *ātmānanda* (mentioned in the *Upaniṣads*) divested of its shackles of self-interest etc.,[31] temporarily though. The extreme implications of

[31] We do not come across this identification clearly anywhere in the *Dhvanyāloka* itself.

this theory deny *Rasa* to the poet himself and deny the very process of *Rasa*-communication from the poet to the critic.[32] However great may be the importance of Abhinavagupta's conclusion in the history of Indian aesthetics, it is not a sound criterion with which to judge the ancients. Indian thought is chary of conceding that the later a doctrine, the more progressive it should necessarily be. In fact our best writers—Kālidāsa and Bhavabhuti[33], Bāṇa and Māgha, and great lexicographers like Amarasiṁha—are in line with the ancient tradition that *Rasas* are relative to the world of the poet's imagination, which in its turn may be assumed to find an echo (*hṛdaya-saṁvāda*) in the

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[32] Ānandavardhana never denies the possibility of such communication.

Cf. [i] शोकः श्लोकत्वमागतः I. 5 and
[ii] शृङ्गारी चेत्कविः काव्ये जातं रसमयं जगत् ।
स एव वीतरागश्चेन्नीरसं सर्वमेव तत् ॥
Parikaraśloka after III. 41

Since *śoka* means 'pity' as well as 'sorrow', the word may well be taken in its sense of 'pity' here. Thus understood, the difficulty imagined by Abhinavagupta will disappear. See next note.

[33] *Cf*. [i] पुटपाकप्रतीकाशो रामस्य करुणो रसः and
करुणस्य मूर्तिरथवा शरीरिणी विरहव्यथेव वनमेति जानकी ।
Uttararāmacarita.
[ii] न वोऽर्थो जातिरग्राम्या श्लेषोऽक्लिष्टः स्फुटो रसः । *Harṣacarita*
[iii] रसः शृङ्गारकरुणहास्यरौद्रभयानकैः ।
वीरादिभी रसैर्युक्तं काव्यमेतदगायताम् ॥ *Rāmāyaṇa*, 1. iv.
[iv] शृङ्गारः शुचिरुज्वलः, उत्साहवर्धनो वीरः—*Nāṭyavarga*.

As Kṣīrasvāmin points out, these are descriptions of *Śṛṅgāra* and *Vīra* respectively; not synonyms (*paryāya*). Amarasiṁha considers that only pity at the sight of sorrow constitutes *karuṇarasa* which he explains as

[NOTE CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE]

critic and result in his aesthetic experience. Even Ānandavardhana has spoken of *Rasa* primarily with reference to the poetic content only.[34]

One more point emerges out of this discussion. The place of nature-poetry wherein there is no shade of emotional behaviour, will be much lower than that of poetry

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कारुण्यं करुणा घृणा कृपा दयानुकम्पा स्यादनुक्लेशोऽपि...

This either points to a tradition different from that of Bharata or describes the spectator's response. Lollaṭa, who is so much criticised by Abhinavagupta and others, (and who is possibly earlier than Ānandavardhana) states in no uncertain terms even like Ānandavardhana himself that long descriptions of Nature by poets irrespective of considerations of *Rasa* are to be regretted:

Cf. सज्जनपुष्पावचयनसन्ध्याचन्द्रोदयादि वाक्यमिह ।
सरसमपि नातिबहुलं प्रकृतरसानन्वितं रचयेत् ॥
यस्तु सरिदद्रिसागरपुरतुरगरथादिवर्णने यत्नः ।
कविशक्तिख्यातिफलो विततधियां नो मतः स इह ॥

—Quoted in *Kāvyamīmāṁsā* Ch. IX. P. 45.

[34] *Cf.* His numerous descriptions of *Rasa* as *vākyārtha* and

रसवन्ति हि वस्तूनि सालङ्काराणि कानिचित् pp. 222, *loc. cit.*

Even *svaśabdavācyatvadoṣa* which Ānandavardhana makes much of is possible only in this sense. But in fact the ancients including Udbhaṭa never said that *svaśabda* was an independent mode of conveying *Rasas*. According to them, along with *vibhāvadi*, *svaśabdas* too could usefully occur, e.g., in Kālidāsa's famous description of the pursued deer in fright—ग्रीवाभङ्गाभिरामं etc. (*Śākuntala* I). The word *bhiyā*..is serving a very important purpose to convey the emotion of fright. If that *svaśabda* is omitted, *bhayānaka-rasa* will not be communicated at all so successfully.

The rigid distinction between the body (*śarīra*) and soul (*ātman*), is to say the least, vapid. An extreme dualism between the two in poetry is very misleading. Only an *advaita* or *viśiṣṭādvaita* will explain the relation correctly.

full of *Rasa-dhvani*. This point is recognised by Professor M. Hiriyanna who goes to the extent of calling it the contribution of Indian poetics to world criticism.[35] That poetry dealing with beauty in nature can evoke aesthetic experience no less charming than that of *Rasa* is a well established fact in modern criticism. As Ruyyaka puts it there is *vastusaundaryasaṁvāda* in nature-poetry in contrast to *hṛdayasaṁvāda* of *rasavad*. If nature's beauty in all its minute details is successfully communicated, it will be *svabhāvokti alaṅkāra;* if the beauty transformed in the imagination of the poet is communicated, it will be *bhāvika alaṅkāra*. In fact there is no disputing the fact that these are shades of beauty which do not deserve to be underrated in the domain of poetry. Thus the older notion of *Alaṅkāra* in its wide sense of *saundaryaprakāra* is as justifiable as the later notion of *Rasa-dhvani*. While the later school is forced to underrate all sources of poetic charm

[35] *Cf.* "There are two types or orders of poetry, according to this school, one dealing with 'emotional situations' in life, as we may describe them and the other dealing with other situations in life or with objects of external nature; and that the latter is reckoned as relatively inferior poetry".-*Art Experience* (Studies in honour of S. Radhakrishnan, Allen & Unwin, p. 180). "Here is another point which is far more important, viz., the discovery that there is an order of poetry which requires a deeper form of appreciation and yields a higher kind of aesthetic experience than is ordinarily acknowledged; and in this discovery we may say, consists one of the chief contributions of India to the general philosophy of art."—*op. cit.* p. 188. Perhaps the *Dhvanikāra* would not subscribe to such a view since he says emphatically in I. 2.

अर्थः सहृदयश्लाघ्यः काव्यात्मा यो व्यवस्थितः ।
वाच्यप्रतीयमानाख्यौ तस्य भेदावुभौ स्मृतौ ॥

other than that of *Rasādi,* the earlier school does not understate the claims of *Rasādi* to the same extent in composite poems:

रसोल्लासी कवेरात्मा स्वच्छे शब्दार्थदर्पणे ।
माधुर्योजोयुतप्रौढे प्रतिबिम्ब्य प्रकाशते ॥ [36]

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[36] Quoted by Pratīhārendurāja in his *Udbhaṭavṛtti* pp. 79-80. It is not part of the author's intention in this article to minimise the importance of Ānandavardhana's searching analysis of the varities of *dhvani*, unique in the history of Sanskrit Poetics. All that is attempted is to show that the older doctrine of *Alaṅkāra* was neither ridiculously stupid nor devoid of poetic sensibility. The two schools are complimentary rather than contradictory to each other.

IX

THE CONCEPT OF SUGGESTION IN SANSKRIT POETICS

The concept of Dhvani or Suggestion, was popularised by Ānandavardhana in the 9th century A.D. Bhāmaha, Daṇḍin, and the other ancient theorists were mainly concerned with evolving the principle of intellectual beauty in literature; their aim was to guide the poet and educate the critic by pointing to such examples in literature as could be explained by intellectual categories. They were no doubt aware that literature is mainly 'a thing of beauty and a joy for ever'; but they also believed that this beauty in literature was not something elusive and indefinable, but something that could be recognised and scientifically explained. It was this belief which made them distinguish a multitude of figures of speech and as many as ten qualities of style. Different modes of style too had been noticed, and a list of flaws in composition had been furnished for the benefit of the poets. This is in short the substance of the doctrines of Alaṅkāra, Guṇa, Rīti and Doṣa.

The essential defect common to all those doctrines is obvious. Enjoyment of literature is not so much intellectual as aesthetic and our intellectual standards of judgment are not often of much service in the matter of aesthetic appreciation. These early theorists often mistook wit for poetic genius and tricks of style for poetic greatness. The themes for an epic were categorically classified and one had but to present them in the orthodox figurative way to be sure of poetic fame. Time has now amply demonstrated the futility of such attempts. The countless Campū-works in

Sanskrit literature which obey these rules so implicity and slavishly are anything but readable. Surprise is so essential an ingredient of wit that no wit will bear repetition. When it is overdone, a stock metaphor such as 'moon-face' or 'foot-lotus' becomes stale and repulsive to a degree, though it may be in strict conformity with a hundred and one rules of rhetoric. Even pun which may be regarded as wit of words, fails to send one to raptures after the first shock of sudden discovery is over. It is an intellectual game at best and can hardly claim an important place in a serious poem.

To most of us today, who have drunk deep at the fountain of European literature, these may sound like so many hometruths and commonplaces of literary criticism. But by the 9th century A.D., when there was no English literature worth anything, when there was no literary contact between India and Greece or Rome, India could not only be proud of a rich possession of literature, but also had made such rapid strides in the matter of literary criticism that critics like Ānandavardhana could propose solutions to the fundamental problems of literature, which have been only confirmed by the knowledge that has accrued in the centuries that have rolled since his time. There was no doubt a grain of truth in the investigations of the earlier theorists. Ānandavardhana sifted this grain from the chaff and ably promulgated a sound theory of literature in his *Locus Classicus* of literary criticism,—the *Dhvanyāloka*. The *Dhvanyāloka* is an epoch-making work in the history of Sanskrit Poetics for more reasons than one. It not only differs from the previous works in its conclusions but deviates from them even in the mode of approach to the subject and the method of treatment. The established procedure of the ancient writers was to define

succinctly, explain summarily and illustrate sparingly. Individual bits of poetry would be selected to illustrate one technical device or another. Such bits strung together with the help of a story—slender though—were supposed to constitute a unit in literature (*Sarga*), and a collection of such units was called an epic *Sargabandha*).[2] Hence the early rhetoricians never for a moment doubted that their procedure was just the right one to be adopted for explaining the essential elements in poetry.

But Ānandavardhana felt differently. He was of opinion that no proper literary estimate of a poem was possible unless it was considered as a whole unit and until the elements that accounted for its unity were traced down. In order that the greatness and beauty of a composition (*Prabandha*) be fully appreciated, Ānandavardhana upheld the intrinsic nature of *Rasas* and endeavoured to bring out their significance by means of a brilliant and thoroughgoing analysis. Bharata's theory of *Rasa* which so far had been restricted in its scope to the field of drama, was now extended to the province of poetry and, what is more, the several factors that help or hinder the progress of *Rasas* in poetry were exhaustively and scientifically treated for the first time. Even in *Mnktakas* or single, self-contained, stanzas, the charm caused by the infusion of *Rasas* was given a higher place than that derived by the inclusion of *Alaṅkāras*.[3]

The chief centre of appeal in all poetry is thus *Rasa* or aesthetic sentiment according to Ānandavardhana; and

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[2] *Cf.* सर्गबन्धो महाकाव्यम्—Daṇḍin's Kāvyādarśa, I. 14.

[3] प्रबन्धे मुक्तके वाऽपि रसादीन् बन्धुमिच्छता ।
यत्नः कार्यः सुमतिना परिहारे विरोधिनाम् ॥—ध्वन्यालोक, II. 17.

they only are critics of culture and taste whose minds are receptive to the aesthetic sentiments delineated in literary compositions. In other words, *sahṛdayatva* or *rasajñatā* are interchangeable terms.[4] The earlier writers on poetics had held *bahuśrutatva* or vast erudition as an indispensable qualification of a literary critic, and his culture had been supposed to consist in the mastery of all the allied branches of learning like Grammar, Metrics and Rhetoric. Ānandavardhana ridicules the idea and rejects it. He states that not all the learning of these sciences will be of any avail in the matter of literary appreciation. The secret of literature will be open only to a few gifted souls.[5] Only the universal appreciation of the best minds can have weight in literary criticism, not the dogmatic assertions of any group who accept and approve of certain conventional categories. There can never be any finality about such categories since they can be replaced by others at any time.[6]

The supremacy of *Rasa* in poetry was thus maintained by Ānandavardhana and he demanded of the literary critic responsiveness or *sahṛdayatva*. He also went a step further and tried to show how even the poet should strain every nerve of his in endowing his works with *Rasa*. The inseparable connection between poetic genius (*Kavipratibhā*)

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[4] रसज्ञतैव सहृदयत्वम्—Ibid. p. 206 (Calcutta Sanskrit Series).

[5] शब्दार्थशासनज्ञानमात्रेणैव न वेद्यते ।
वेद्यते स हि काव्यार्थतत्त्वज्ञैरेव केवलम् ॥—Ibid. I. 7.

[6] किमिदं सहृदयत्वं नाम? किं रसभावानपेक्षकाव्याश्रितसमयविशेषाभिज्ञत्वं, उत रसभावादिमयकाव्यस्वरूपपरिज्ञाननैपुण्यम्? पूर्वस्मिन् पक्षे तथाविधसहृदयव्यवस्थापितानां शब्दविशेषाणां चारुत्वनियमो न स्यात्, पुनः समयान्तरेणान्यथाऽपि व्यवस्थापनसंभवात् ।—Ibid. p. 206.

and *Rasa* was strikingly brought home by Ānandavardhana. From the legend about the origin of the *Rāmāyaṇa,* Ānandavardhana draws the conclusion that it was the boundless pathos of the situation, when one of the happy pair of linnets was shot down in cold blood and the other was shrieking piteously, that spurred the creative imagination of Vālmīki to compose his immortal poem.[7] He also traces the steady progress of *Karuṇa-rasa* or the pathetic sentiment from the beginning, right up to the end of the *Rāmāyaṇa*.[8] Ānandavardhana waxes eloquent over the salutary influence of *Rasas* in poetry. Though the themes for poetry have always been the same, if there is yet endless variety from poet to poet, it is exclusively due to the multi-formed manifestation of *Rasas*. *Rasas,* in short, endow eternity of interest and charm to subjects otherwise limited and circumscribed.[9] Even like trees in spring, well-known themes put on a charm and splendour altogether new and fresh, when they are associated with *Rasa*.[10] That is why Ānandavardhana appeals to the poets never to become indifferent to considerations of *Rasa* while writing their works.[11]

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[7] काव्यस्यात्मा स एवार्थस्तथा चादिकवेः पुरा ।
क्रौञ्चद्वन्द्ववियोगोत्थश्शोकः श्लोकत्वमागतः ॥—Ibid. 1. 5.

[8] For detailed information, see the present writer's article: "Vālmīki and Vyāsa, an Indian approach." The Bharat Jyoti, Divali Number, 1947.

[9] *Cf.* मितोऽप्यनन्ततां प्राप्तः काव्यमार्गो यदाश्रयात् ।—Ibid. IV. 3.

[10] दृष्टपूर्वा अपि ह्यर्थाः काव्ये रसपरिग्रहात् ।
सर्वे नवा इवाभान्ति मधुमास इव द्रुमाः ॥—Ibid. IV. 4.

[11] रसादिमय एकस्मिन् कविः स्यादवधानवान् ।—Ibid. IV. 5.

What then are these considerations of *Rasa* to be so carefully kept in mind by the poet and so attentively appreciated by the critic? The first and most important consideration governing all compositions aiming at *Rasa* is *Aucitya* or propriety, and there can be no greater failing of a poet than *Anaucitya* or impropriety.[12] The demands made by the principle of *Aucitya* are:—Firstly, the selection by the poet of such themes only as are rich in situations that admit of a free and full handling of the accessories of *Rasa*, viz., *Sthāyibhāva*, *Vibhāva*, *Anubhāva* and *Sañcāribhāva*.[13] Secondly, the poet should not be blindly faithful to the original story wherein conflicting *Rasas* may be found. He should not hesitate to recast the story so as to suit the dominant sentiment. Thirdly, the poet should construct his plot with a view to evoking the sentiments, and not in servile obedience to formal rules of Poetics. Fourthly, no single *Rasa* should be delineated incessantly. There should be a variety of *Rasas*, and at the same time the unity of the dominant emotion should not be impaired. Finally, the poet should use *Alaṅkāras* sparingly, even when he is capable of using them in plenty.[14]

When the poet pays deference to the demands of *Rasa* and *Aucitya*, his poetry shines out supreme. He shakes off the artificial rules that enchain his creative imagination and becomes a free and fearless agent. Ānandavardhana's language becomes poetic when he describes the poet's

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[12] अनौचित्यादृते नान्यद्रसभङ्गस्य कारणम् ।
प्रसिद्धौचित्यबन्धस्तु रसस्योपनिषत्परा ॥—Ibid. p. 186.

[13] For an explanation of the terms, see the present writer's article on 'Bharata's Theory of Rasa', The Poona Orientalist, Jan. 1948.

[14] Cf. Dhvanyāloka, III 10-14.

mission and privilege. 'In the boundless realm of poetry, the poet himself is to be regarded as the sole creator. According to his tastes, the whole world will revolve. If the poet is sensitive to emotions himself, the whole world will be depicted by him as suffused with emotion; on the other hand, if the should lack in feeling, the world of his creation also will be dry and sapless. He is free to lend life to inanimate objects and make even animate things look inanimate in their behaviour. It is a rare privilege of the poet that he can thus transmute anything and everything in the world to solid gold of poetry. But in this he succeeds just in the same proportion as he does justice to the claims of *Rasa*'.[15]

Having thus strikingly demonstrated the all-important nature of *Rasa* in poetry and its superiority over other formal excellences, Ānandavardhana attempted to give an explanatoin of the process by which *Rasas* are delineated by the poet and enjoyed by the critic. It was in this connection that he brought forward his famous theory of *Dhvani* or suggestion. We have so far postponed a discussion of this concept because in the first place its significance can be grasped only in its relation to the concepts of

[15] अपारे काव्यसंसारे कविरेव प्रजापतिः ।
यथाऽस्मै रोचते विश्वं तथेदं परिवर्तते ॥
श्रृङ्गारी चेत् कविः काव्ये जातं रसमयं जगत् ।
स एव वीतरागश्चेत् नीरसं सर्वमेव तत् ॥
भावानचेतनानपि चेतनवत् चेतनानचेतनवत् ।
व्यवहारयति यथेच्छं सुकविः काव्ये स्वतन्त्रतया ॥
तस्मान्नास्त्येव तद्वस्तु यत् सर्वात्मना रसतात्पर्यवतः कवेस्तदिच्छया तदभिमत-रसाङ्गतां न धत्ते । तथोपनिबध्यमानं वा न चारुत्वातिशयं पुष्णाति.

—Ibid. p. 293.

Alaṅkāra and *Rasa,* and secondly because it is none too simple.

The problem that Ānandavardhana had to solve presented itself before him in some such way as this: 'What is the essence of literature? And how is this essence or soul of literature connected with the skill of the poet on the one hand and with the aesthetic response of the critic on the other? Is it possible to formulate a principle of literary criticism which is wide enough to explain all grades of beauty in literature and by following which one can be guided aright in the matter of recognising the multi-formed manifestations of that life-bestowing essence of literature? These questions had not occurred to the minds of the earlier theorists precisely in this form. They took it for granted that literature is beautiful and they had tried to analyse this beauty minutely and to propose a scheme of *Alaṅkāras* which in their opinion was quite exhaustive. All specific shades of beauty in literature were labelled as so many *Alaṅkāras,*[16] and general excellances as so many *Guṇas* or Qualities of *Śabda* (sound), and *Artha* (sense) or both. Ānandavardhana saw clearly that these considerations did not touch even the fringe of the fundamental problem. The presence or absence of *Alaṅkāras* did not matter at all in masterpieces of literature. There were poems devoid of *Alaṅkāras* and yet highly beautiful. There were also poems containing several *Alaṅkāras* and yet lacking in appeal. As regards the *Guṇas, Rīti, Vṛtti* and so on, they never played any part in poetry by themselves, independent of other considerations. The particular *Guṇas,* etc. in a poem were consequenced by the demands of *Rasa* only and

[16] अनन्ता हि वाग्विकल्पास्तत्प्रकारा एव चालङ्काराः—Ibid. p. 275.

their value was thus not intrinsic but only conditioned by the exigencies of *Rasa*.[17]

Ānandavardhana, then, could have easily settled the problem of the 'soul' of poetry by saying that *Rasa* is the soul, neither *Alaṅkāra*, nor *Guṇa*. But here again there was the danger of the principle of *Rasa* being interpreted in a formal and mechanical way, and such an interpretation would surely have misled the aspiring poet and the budding critic alike by exercising the same stranglehold upon their minds as the categories of figures of speech had done before. Ānandavardhana not only wanted to steer clear of this danger, but he was also anxious to avoid the pitfalls of the ancients who did not distinguish any varying grades of excellence in different works of literature but thought that all works contained a uniform kind of beauty. Both these objects of Ānandavardhana were satisfactorily accomplished in the new concept of literary criticism that he formulated, viz., *Dhvani*.

What are the essentials of the concept of *Dhvani?* The word *Dhvani* literarlly means 'Tone'; but it is used in the technical sense of 'Suggestiveness' in Ānandavardhana's book: It is the characteristic *par excellence* of *Rasa* in poetry. *Rasas* cannot be said to be objectively present in any work of art or literature. They are only present in a latent from and in the abstract.[18] The concrete raw-material of poetry

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[17] *Cf.* तमर्थमवलम्बन्ते येऽङ्गिनं ते गुणाः स्मृताः ।
अङ्गाश्रितास्त्वलङ्कारा मन्तव्याः कटकादिवत् ॥—Ibid. II. 7.

Cf. also अस्फुटस्फुरितं काव्यतत्त्वमेतद् यथोदितं ।
अशक्नुवद्भिर्व्याकर्तुं रीतयः संप्रवर्तिताः ॥—Ibid. III. 47.

[18] *Cf.* चित्तवृत्तिविशेषा हि रसादयः ।—p. 291.

consists in words and meanings. The former may please or pain the ear of the reader; the latter may instruct or amuse his intellect. But it is not for these things that man has been taking an abiding interest in the pursuit of poetry down the ages. The reason for this eternal interest and universal appeal of poetry should be sought elsewhere, should be sought in man's emotional inheritance and his emotional behavior. Thus the cause is more subjective than objective, but it is not entirely subjective either. In that case every work of literature, irrespective of the greatness of its author ought to please and satisfy the reader. It is not so. Only the works of a few master-poets (*Mahā-kavis*) happen to delight the critics of taste. This is because *Rasas* are inseparably bound up with the works of literature in some way or the other.[19] Now what is the nature of this relation? How do the concrete words and meanings in poetry succeed in becoming the media for the transmission of *Rasa?* How does *Rasa*, an experience of the poet at the first instance, become the critic's at the final stage?

Ānandavardhana's reply to all these questions is embodied in his principle of *Dhvani*. *Dhvani* is a unique power that words and meanings acquire in the province of poetry.[20] In ordinary parlance, words have only two types of meaning:—One is the conventional meaning, which is standardized by universal acceptance *(Saṅketitārtha* or

[19] *Cf.* यत्र तु रसादीनामविषयत्वं स काव्यप्रकारो न संभवत्येव—Loc. cit.

[20] *Cf.* प्रतीयमानं पुमरन्यदेव वस्त्वस्ति वाणीषु महाकवीनाम् ।
यत्तत्प्रसिद्धावयवातिरिक्तं विभाति लावण्यमिवाङ्गनासु ॥—Ibid. I. 4.

Cf. also—यत्रार्थश्शब्दो वा तमर्थमुपसर्जनीकृतस्वार्थौ ।
व्यङ्क्तः काव्यविशेषः स ध्वनिरिति सूरिभिः कथितः ॥—Ibid. I. 13.

Vācyārtha); the other is the idiomatic sense in particular expressions, sanctioned by usage (*Lakṣyārtha*). Even this second meaning is but rarely utilized in life, since it is resorted to only when the surface-meaning fails to be coherent. There is no other import of words in our common parlance, and in the language of science too, these two imports serve our purpose quite well. But in literature, they will be found to be totally inadequate since the purpose of literature is not mere intelligibility or the education of the reader. These may be there incidentally, but its main concern is to evoke certain emotions which are universally present in men. To accomplish this purpose, language in literature takes the assistance of a new power unknown to it in life and this is *Dhvani* or suggestion. A passage in literature is richly suggestive of the various emotions and the critic's culture and talent are evidenced in his ability to catch these subtle suggestions. A poet's greatness too lies only in the best service he can derive from this unique process of suggestion while he composes his work.[21] If a poet fails to make his poetry suggestive of *Rasas*, he stands condemned because Rasas cannot be delineated in any other manner, and there is no poetry worth the name witout *Rasa*.[22]

That is why Ānandavardhana affirms categorically that *Dhvani* is the soul of poetry.[23] By admitting the truth of

[21] *Cf.* सोऽर्थः तद्व्यक्तिसामर्थ्ययोगी शब्दश्च कश्चन ।
यत्नतः प्रत्यभिज्ञेयौ तौ शब्दार्थौ महाकवेः ॥—Ibid. I. 8.

[22] *Cf.* यत्र तु रसादीनमविषयत्वं स काव्यप्रकारो न संभवत्येव—Ibid. p. 291.
Cf. also. नीरसस्तु प्रवन्धो यः सोऽपशब्दो महान् कवेः ।
स तेनाकविरेव स्यादन्येनास्मृतलक्षणः ॥—Ibid. p. 211.

[23] *Cf.* काव्यस्यात्मा स एवार्थः (प्रतीयमानार्थः)—Ibid. I. 15.

this statement, the real nature of poetry will be grasped and the supreme importance of *Rasa* realised. The next question that arises is whether the principle of *Dhvani* is adequate enough to estimate the significance of *Alaṅkāra*, *Guṇa*, and the other well-known elements of poetry. Yes; it is more than adequate. Guided by the principle of *Dhvani*, we can unerringly decide that *Alaṅkāras* will act as ornaments only so long as they help the even flow of *Rasa* and the moment they hinder it, they cease to be ornaments and act as so many deadweights. When the principle of *Rasa* as underlying the adoption of *Guṇas* is realised, we know precisely when the particular *Guṇas* are merits and when they cease to be so, nay, when they become positive demerits or *Doṣas*. That Guṇas are not stable and invariable characteristics, but only variable adjuncts, will be clearly understood. The same is true of *Rītis*, *Saṅghaṭanā* and *Vṛtti* too. Thus all the earlier concepts get added significance by a clear grasp of the principle of *Dhvani*.

The principle of *Dhvani* will be found serviceable in another direction also. No one can deny the fact that all works of literature are not of uniform excellence but admit of varying degrees of excellence. The earlier concepts of *Alaṅkāra, Guṇa,* etc. do not help us in the least in detecting these degrees of excellence. With the principle of *Dhvani*, it is not so; for *Dhvani* is not a watertight thing, not admitting of varieties. The ways of suggestion are as manifold as they are mysterious. Its best and most delightful manifestation is in regard to *Rasa*, and a poem where *Rasas* are evoked lavishly is bound to belong to the best class of poetry (*Dhvani* or *Uttama-kāvya*). But there are other ways of suggestion too. Instead of *Rasas* being allowed to shine out supremely, they may be over-shadowed by verbal skill

and the poet's extravagant imagery. Here the intellectual appeal gets the better of emotional appeal and hence we may say that it does not belong to the very best class of poetry but to the next-best (*Guṇībhūta-vyaṅgya* or *Madhyama-kāvya*). And of course there is the bulk of literature which is the work not of first-rate minds but of third-rate poets who mistake the outward glitter and polish of language to be the very soul and substance of poetry. The works of such writers abound in figures of speech and particularly teem with tricks of metre and style. To say the least, their appeal is only pictorial since they are totally devoid of *Rasa-Dhvani;* and they are to be brought under the category of *Citra-kāvya.*[24]

Nor is it all. So far we have dealt with *Dhvani* only in relation to *Rasa*. But the domain of *Dhvani* is so vast that it is difficult to explain all its various manifestations schematically. Yet Ānandavardhana makes an attempt in that direction, knowing full well the difficulty of his task.[25] Beauty is an essential quality of suggestion, and as such, even when there is no suggestion of *Rasa,* only suggestion of an otherwise commonplace idea, or suggestion of an otherwise commonplace figure of speech, causes delight in poetry. *Vastu-Dhvani* and *Alaṅkāra-Dhvani* too, have thus an important place in literature; such instances are more

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[24] *Cf.* काव्याध्वनि ध्वनेर्व्यंङ्‌यं प्राधान्यैकनिबन्धनम् ।
सर्वत्र तत्र विषयो ज्ञेयः सहृदयैर्जनैः ॥—Ibid. p. 294.

Cf. also रसभावादिविषयविवक्षाविरहे सति ।
अलङ्कारनिबन्धो यः स चित्रविषयो मतः ॥—Ibid. p. 292.

[25] *Cf.* एवं ध्वनेः प्रभेदाः प्रभेदभेदाश्च केन शक्यन्ते ।
सङ्‌ख्यातुं दिङ्‌मात्रं तेषामिदमुक्तमस्माभिः ॥—Ibid. III. 45.

beautiful than ordinary commonplace ideas and mechanical figures of speech; but at the same time they are not of course just as beautiful as instances of *Rasa-Dhvani*. Yet their beauty is nearer that of *Rasa-Dhvani* than that of commonplace ideas and *Alaṅkāras*. That is why amongst the countless *Alaṅkāras*, not all are equally delightful and pleasing, but only some; and these some (e.g. *Samāsokti*, *Aprastuta-Praśaṁsā*, *Paryāyokta*, etc.) will be found on closer examination to contain an element of suggestion or *Dhvani*. Thus the principle of *Dhvani* will train the judgment of the critic properly and guide the activity of the poet in the right direction. In the words of Ānandavardhana himself, it is an eye-opener;[26] and it is in strict conformity with the practice of the greatest of poets like Vālmīki, Vyāsa and Kālidāsa.[27]

At about the beginning of the ninth century A.D., several schools of literary criticism prevailed in Kashmir. And in Ānandavardhana's *Dhvanyāloka*, we see an attempt made for the first time to set forth a theory of poetry assimilating all the essentials found in the various schools, and at the same time presenting a new explanation of all the problems. Being a typical product of that age of polemics, the *Dhvanyāloka* was written in a contentious and argumentative style. Though to an extent the *Dhvanyāloka* accepts the conclusions of the earlier theorists, it doest not go the whole hog with any one of them. It presupposes the *modns operandi* of *Rasa* taught by Bharata and adopts his

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[26] *Cf.* इति काव्यार्थविवेको योऽयं चेतश्चमत्कृतिविधायी ।
सूरिभिरनुसृतसारैरस्मदुपज्ञो न विस्मार्यः ॥—Ibid. p. 183.

[27] वाल्मीकिव्यासमुख्याश्च ये प्रख्याताः कवीश्वराः ।
तदभिप्रायबाह्योऽयं नास्माभिर्दर्शितो नयः ॥—Ibid. p. 211.

very terminology; but at the same time it considers *Rasa* only in relation to *Guṇa*, *Alaṅkāra*, *Doṣa*, and other rhetorical concepts. It implicitly borrows the scheme of *Alaṅkāras* as taught by Bhāmaha and Udbhaṭa, recognises that they are beautifying elements in poetry, but introduces one condition that they should be in harmony with *Rasa*. Similarly the concepts of *Guṇa*, *Rīti*, *Vṛtti*, and *Saṅghaṭanā* are referred to and accepted, subject to the consideration of *Rasa-Dhvani*. The linguistic analysis of Grammarians and Logicians is adopted only to be modified so as to suit the unique nature of poetry. Other schools of thought too come in only for review. Thus, in its very nature, the *Dhvanyāloka* could not satisfy completely the sentiments of any single school of thought or discipline of Rhetoric, excepting a section of literary connoisseurs.[28] And instead of stopping the controversy about literary theories once and for all time, it gave a fresh impetus for further discussion with a greater zest.

Commentators on Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra* like Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka wrote elaborate works[29] to disprove Ānandavardhana's theory that *Rasa* is always suggested. Followers of orthodox disciplines of rhetoric like Pratīhārendurāja tried their best to defend their systems by bringing *Dhvani* under one or another figure of speech. Logicians like Jayantabhaṭṭa and Mahimabhaṭṭa too joined in the attack against the *dhvani*-theory and the latter wrote a long polemical treatise with the only object of demolishing the doctrine of *dhvani* in poetry. Independent writers like

[28] *Cf.* तेन ब्रूमः सहृदयमनःप्रीतये तत्स्वरूपं—Ibid. I. 1.
also सहृदयानामानन्दो मनसि लभतां प्रतिष्ठामिति प्रकाश्यते—Vṛtti thereon.

[29] *Cf.* The Hṛdayadarpaṇa.

Kuntaka sought to show off their greater originality than Ānandavardhana's by offering new explanations of *dhvani*. There were text-book writers like Viśvanātha and Jagannātha who took objection to points of detail in the *Dhvanyāloka*. That even such an implicit follower of Ānandavardhana as Mammaṭa thought it better to avoid the very mention of *dhvani* in his definition of poetry is clear enough to show how this controversy had done considerable damage to the theory of *dhvani* as formulated by Ānandavardhana and elaborated by Abhinavagupta.

The effect of these criticisms on the subsequent development of the *Dhvani* theory is clearly evidenced in Mammaṭa's masterpiece *Kāvya-Prakāśa* and a host of later works modelled upon it. We may say that Mammaṭa almost fixed for all time to come the course along which the *Dhvani*-theory had to flow by his most systematic and perfect treatment of the various topics of *Alaṅkāra-śāstra*. Following Abhinavagupta, he disproved the criticisms that had been levelled against the *Dhvani*-theory and demonstrated that it was intrinsically sound. But at the same time he did not lose himself in any exaggerated admiration of the *Dhvani*-theory exclusively.

Ānandavardhana had already tackled the problem boldly and squarely and given *Dhvani* a status and a name in the realm of poetry. The battle of words that immediately followed in the wake of the *Dhvanyāloka* was fast subsiding in tempo. And Mammaṭa gave the final deathblow to the criticisms against *Dhvani*. The *Kāvya-prakāśa* put an end to all the controversies that were raging earlier about the validity of the *dhvani*-theory. In what Mammaṭa did, there is nothing much of an originality. He only paraphrases either Ānandavardhana or Abhinavagupta while

giving an exposition of the *Dhvani* theory. But his book was so timed that it acquired great publicity and veneration. Mammaṭa, who was considered to be a very great authority on all branches of learning, set the seal of his authority to the *Dhvani* theory and was eventually able to disarm all fastidious criticisms. Mammaṭa at the same time, was careful enough not to start any fresh controversies; this he could manage by giving an equal, nay, a greater importance even to the traditional concepts of rhetoric in respect of detailed treatment. In a word, Mammaṭa produced a masterpiece of a text-book, which people were badly needing and it came to receive so much appreciation that it became the fashion to write similar text-books in the period that followed.

The natural course for the development of the *Dhvani* theory was thus hampered in a way. Individual and exclusive treatises on the *Dhvani*-theory like the *Dhvanyāloka* went out of vogue. In the whole range of Sanskrit Poetics there is not a second work which exclusively treats of the *Dhvani*-theory. Mammaṭa followed the method of a text-book writer, not of an original thinker. But Mammaṭa's admirers imitated his method slavishly in later years and entirely abandoned the noble path set by writers like Ānandavardhana and Kuntaka. The dhvani-theory is invariably considered in relation to the categories of *Guṇas* and *Alaṅkāras* in the later works on Sanskrit Poetics. Even the amount of space that Mammaṭa gave to a consideration of the *Dhvani*-theory goes on gradually decreasing until the last stage is reached when *Alaṅkāras* alone, with all their divisions and subdivisions, fill the pages of works on Sanskrit Poetics. Ruyyaka's *Alaṅkāra-sarvasva*, Appaya Dikshita's *Citramīmāṁsā* and *Kuvalayānanda*, Jagannātha's

Rasagaṅgādhara and Keśavamiśra's *Alaṅkāra Kaustubha* illustrate this growing tendency to minimise the treatment of *Dhvani* and revel in the subtleties of *Alaṅkāras* and adding more to their number. But it is significant to note that all these later writers swear to the all-important nature of *Dhvani* in theory though in practice they indulge only in the classification, distinction and illustration of the *Alaṅkāras*. Thus the mighty stream of *Dhvani*, which started with Ānandavardhana was made to run in a narrow channel prescribed by Mammaṭa, and the channel went on becoming narrower and narrower until at last the waters almost dried up in the sands of the formidable foray of endless *Alaṅkāras*. We can now conclude this essay with an apt quotation from Ānandavardhana himself:—

इत्युक्तलक्षणो यो ध्वनिर्विवेच्यः प्रयत्नतस्सद्भिः ।
सत्काव्यं कर्तुं वा ज्ञातुं वा सम्यगभियुक्तैः ॥

X

THE CONCEPT OF RASĀBHĀSA IN SANSKRIT LITERARY THEORY

In popular usage today the term *rasābhāsa* is almost a synonym for bathos. But as a technical term in Sanskrit criticism, *rasābhāsa* has specific implications which are missed in the popular usage. It is intimately bound up with the concept of *rasa*, which forms the very bedrock of Sanskrit literary theory; and serves, in a large measure, to render explicit aspects of the latter which are fundamental to Sanskrit literary criticism.

I

Bharata is indeed the Aristotle of India; and it is the principle of *rasa* which forms the central thread of his countless rules about plot, character and setting in drama. His division of plays into ten kinds and his classifications of heroes and heroines derive directly from his conception of *rasa*. What Dixon Scott says about the 'pattern called the plot' in Rudyard Kipling's novels may be applied with equal justice to Sanskrit dramas conforming to Bharata's prescriptions:—

"The characters spring to attention like soldiers on parade; they respond briskly to a certain description, they wear a fixed suit of idiosyncrasies like a uniform. A mind like this *must* use types and set counters; it feels dissatisfied, ineffective, unsafe, unless it can reduce the fluid waverings of character, its flitting caprices and twilit desires, to some tangible system. The characters of such a man will not only be definite;

they will be definitions. His heroes will be courage incarnate, his weak men will be unwaveringly weak; and those who are mixed will be mixed mathematically, with all their traits clearly related to and explained by some neat blend of blood and race and caste behind. They are marked by a strange immobility. They strike certain attitudes—and retain them."[1]

If the heroes in Sanskrit drama are cast in a single mould, if they seem to obey a convention removed from the logic of life, if they appear to be stowed into the interstices of a pre-arranged design that relies upon their remaining fixed quantities, it is because Bharata fixed once for all that '*Nāṭaka* or drama *par excellence* should present only a 'high' theme with noble heroes, noble in love, and noble in action. Though the dramatic emotions *(rasas)* were counted as eight (or nine), only two—Love *(śṛṅgāra)* and Heroism *(vīra)*—were prescribed as fit *aṅgirasas* or dominant emotions.[2] The reasons which Bharata had in mind in imposing such restrictions become clear in the observations of Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta. Drama should be a mirror of life[3]—not only of life actually lived by men (high, low and middling), but also of the highest possibilities of life as imagined by the artist and embodied in his hero. In ancient India, literature, philosophy and ethics were all of a piece, and the latter provided the moral ideal which literature tried to propagate in its own way through the medium of beauty and delight.[4] The recognised values of

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[1] Dixon Scott, *Men of Letters*, p. 58.

[2] Cf. The well-known dictum: *eka eva bhavedaṅgī śṛṅgāro vīra eva vā*

[3] Cf. *avasthānukṛtirnāṭyaṁ* —Bharata.

[4] Cf. *sadācāropadeśarūpā hi nāṭakādigoṣṭhī vineyajanahitārthameva munibhiravatāritā*-Dhvanyāloka (Chowkhamba edn.), pp. 398-399.

life for men at large were three: *Dharma* (duty in the religious, social, individual and moral spheres), *Artha* (material gain in the personal, social and political spheres) and *Kāma* (pleasure). Since the last is a value which people naturally take to, drama addresses itself to the task of presenting its best and most refined aspects only in the lives of the hero and the heroine. That is why *śṛṅgāra* is described as pure *(śuci)*, bright *(ujjvala)*, and beautiful *(darśanīya)* by Bharata, and as the sweetest and most delicate *(sukumāratara)* emotion by Ānandavardhana. The slightest touch of impropriety *(anaucitya)* or vulgarity *(grāmyatā)* will debase it, as noted even by Daṇḍin, not to mention Ānandavardhana, in whose opinion there is no blemish *(doṣa)* graver than *anaucitya*[5] in the delineation of a *rasa*. It is thus clear that a serious drama cannot admit of lower shades of love as the dominant emotion (i.e. as seen in the principal characters). It is only 'heroic' or lofty love of ideal characters, love that can serve as a model for humanity, love that can be a means to the ultimate end of *dharma*, that merits treatment in the hero of a *nāṭaka*.

Most Sanskrit dramas have a romantic theme, and obey this injunction of Bharata in their treatment of love. But there are a few, like the *Mudrārākṣasa*, which are not romantic, which have no place for women as heroines. We can expect here, according to Bharata, only heroism *(vīra)* as the principal emotion—heroism directed to the achievement of some *artha* or good, temporal or spiritual, personal or social. *Vīrarasa*, in other words, is the *sine qua non* of *nāṭakas* mixed, or sometimes unmixed, with high *śṛṅgāra*.

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[5] Cf. *anaucityādṛte nānyad rasabhaṅgasya kāraṇam;*
prasiddhaucitya bandhastu rasasyopaniṣat parā—ibid., p. 330.

Such a stand shuts out from the principal characters any trace of vulgarity and triviality and leaves no room for what is low and immoral. We find here the sovereignty of the moral value claiming absolute allegiance even from the poet and the dramatist. If it forbade freedom and expansion, it contributed to depth and richness in a way unknown to other literatures. Unless the moral background of the *rasa* principle is fully realised, we shall not be in a position to follow the concept of *rasābhāsa.*

Drama is, of course, the playground of many characters and many emotions. It has place for low people as well as high; for emotions morally pure as well as impure. What is the place of these emotions *(rasa)* lower down in the scale? The answer becomes simple when we grasp that only the dominant emotion of the principal characters *(aṅgirasa)* is to be 'high' or noble. The emotions of the characters ranged against the hero *(prati-nāyakas),* of those that occur in the sub-plots *(patākā, prakarī,* etc.*)* and of minor characters like the jester *(vidūṣaka)* may be life-like, and even low or vulgar; yet their artistic value is not diminished on that account. There are, thus, two standards for judging *rasas* in a *nāṭaka.* While the artistic standard alone is final in judging the *aṅga-rasas* or subordinate emotions, it must be supplemented by the moral standard in appreciating the *aṅgi-rasa* or primary emotion. The former can be many in a play; but the latter can be only one. And in the opinion of Abhinavagupta, the one invariable *rasa* throughout is the heroic *(vīra).*

What about the many play-goers who crowd the theatre only for the sake of entertainment? Surely, they are not in the least interested in instruction. Should there be no recognition of their demands? Abhinavagupta anticipates

this question in his classic of dramatic criticism, the *Abhinavabhāratī*, and answers that Bharata has recognised many forms of the drama other than *nāṭaka,* only as a concession to popular taste. The forms, viz., *Prahasana, Bhāṇa,* and *Utsṛṣṭikāṅka,* are there only for popular entertainment. Here, the principal emotion *(aṅgi-rasa)* itself may be unrelated to the moral standard. It is enough if they are entertaining *(rañjaka)*.[6] We have, then, *rasas* which may be merely entertaining, or which may be both entertaining and edifying. The former belong to plays other than *nāṭaka,* when they are dominant; but they may appear in *nāṭakas* as subordinate emotions.

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[6] The above exposition is based on the following text of Abhinavagupta:

सर्वंरसयोग्यतायामपि नाटके प्रकरणे च धर्मार्थादिवीर एव प्रधानं परमार्थतः सर्वेषु नायकभेदेषु वीरत्वानुगमदर्शनात् । समवकारे तु यद्यपि हि शृङ्गारादित्वमुक्तं तथापि वीर एव प्रधानं रौद्रो वा, डिमव्यायोगयोरप्येवम् । ईहामृगेऽपि रौद्रप्राधान्यमेव, नाटिकायां तु शृङ्गार एव प्रधानम् । एवं तावद् वीररौद्रशृङ्गारा यथास्वं पुमर्थत्रयप्राणभूतत्वेन वर्तमाना एतेषु प्रयोगेषु; शान्तबीभत्सरसौ तु चरमपुमर्थप्रयोगात्तत्र च सर्वस्य नाधिकारोऽपि कस्यचिदपश्चिमजन्मनोऽधिकारान्नाटके तत्फलप्रधानतया प्राधान्यमवलम्बेयातां तथापि नासौ प्रचुरप्रयोग इति तयोः पुरुषार्थप्रवरप्राणितयोरपि वीरादिरसान्तराध्यावापेनावस्थापनम् । एवं तावत् पुमर्थविषयो रूपकरसविषय एव परमार्थतः, तथापि त्वितिवृत्तवैतत्याद्रसान्तरप्रयोगोऽपि तदङ्गतया तत्र भवति । एवं तत्प्रधानचेष्टायोगाद् वृत्तिवैचित्र्यमत्रोचितमेव । उत्सृष्टिकाङ्क-प्रहसन—भाणास्तु करुणहास्यविस्मयप्रधानत्वात् रञ्जकरसप्रधानाः, तत एवात्र स्त्रीबालमूर्खादिरधिकारी । न च विततमत्रेतिवृत्तम्, इतिवृत्तवैचित्र्यमपि तत्र नास्ति ।

—*Abhinavabhāratī* on Nāṭyaśāstra (vol. II. GOS. 1934) p. 451.

II

In the light of the above, we might now try to understand the various attempts made by Sanskrit theorists to expand the concept of *rasābhāsa,* i.e., emotion transposed or off key.

The word *rasābhāsa* is conspicuous by its absence in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* of Bharata. But Abhinavagupta, in his *Locana*, strives to find Bharata's authority for this concept in the expression *anukṛti*, which figures in Bharata's explanation of the emotion of *hāsya* (laughter).[7] The words *anukṛti* (imitation), *amukhyatā* (subordinate position) and *ābhāsa* (appearance) are all synonyms to Abhinavagupta.[8] Whenever the emotion of love *(śṛṅgāra)* is poorly imitated or misplaced, Bharata has laid down that it will result in the comic, or *hāsya*.[9] What is meant by the playwright as *śṛṅgāra* will turn out to be *hāsya* through improper handling. Abhinavagupta does not question this. But he recognises *śṛṅgārābhāsa* as an intermediary stage between *śṛṅgāra* and *hāsya;* and observes that Bharata too anticipates it in his theory of *hāsya*. The following is an example cited by Abhinavagupta to make his point clear:

दूराकर्षणमोहमन्त्र इव मे तन्नाम्नि याते श्रुतिं
चेत: कालकलामपि प्रसहते नावस्थितिं तां विना ।
एतैराकुलितस्य विक्षतरतेरङ्गैरनङ्गातुरैः
सम्पद्येत कथं तदाप्तिसुखमित्येतन्न वेद्मि स्फुटम् ॥

(Quoted also in *Kāvyānuśāsana*, p. 123 [N. S. Edn.])

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[7] Cf. *'śṛṅgārānukṛtiryā tu hāsyaḥ'* —quoted in the *Locana*, pp. 178-79.

[8] Cf. *anukṛtiramukyatā ābhāsa iti hyeko' rthaḥ*— Loc. cit.

[9] Cf. *śṛṅgāraddhi bhaved hāsyaḥ* —Bharata.

The above presents Rāvaṇa madly in love with Sītā. From the point of view of Rāvaṇa it is *śṛṅgāra* all right. His emotion is deep and his longing acute. The audience too enjoy it as *śṛṅgāra* at first, when they see it acted on the stage. But they soon realise its one-sided nature, and their moral judgement disapproves of it. Thereafter, Rāvaṇa's further overtures fail to enlist their sympathy and only excite their laughter. Their earlier enjoyment of Rāvaṇa's love is none the less true; but it cannot be pure *śṛṅgāra;* nor can it be *hāsya,* though it serves as a cause of *hāsya* at a later stage. What is the *rasa* then? Abhinavagupta's answer is that it is not any *rasa* at all, but only a semblance or illusion *(ābhāsa)* of *rasa.* Loosely, one might call it *śṛṅgāra-rasa;* but technically it would be incorrect. It deserves to be reckoned only as *śṛṅgāra-rasābhāsa.* The circumstances where pure love can spring are not present here in their entirety. There is mad desire on the part of Rāvaṇa, who does not even pause to consider whether the woman likes him or no. True love *(rati)* can spring only after making sure of a favourable response from the woman. The audience thus see *ratyābhāsa* in Rāvaṇa, not *rati;* the excitants he experiences thus appear to the audience only as *vibhāvābhāsas.* Hence, their delight *(carvaṇā)* cannot be anything more than *carvaṇābhāsa.* Therefore, the designation *śṛṅgāra-rasābhāsa* will help us to distinguish it from instances of genuine *śṛṅgāra.* Though *anaucitya* (impropriety) occurs, it does not become a blemish, because it does not affect the principal emotion, being located only in the villain and remaining but an *aṅgarasa.* The same is true of other *rasas* too, when impropriety enters into their treatment. Improper *vīra,* for instance, will only be

vīrābhāsa.[10] But Abhinavagupta does not offer specific illustrations of these. Moreover, the degree of impropriety in *rasābhāsa* is not so great as in the jumbling of diametrically opposed emotions like love and apathy. It is almost a replica of *rasa*, but for a slight deficiency. The deficiency is so slight that it produces the illusion of a full-fledged *rasa* for the moment, even like the illusion of silver produced by a shining shell. It will be found that the question of impropriety, at least in the case of *śṛṅgāra*, involves moral besides literary judgment.

III

Before Abhinavagupta, the only writer on poetics who finds occasion to refer explicitly to the concept of *rasābhāsa*

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10 *Vide*....औचित्येन प्रवृत्तौ चित्तवृत्तेरास्वाद्यत्वे स्थायिन्या रसो, व्यभिचारिण्या भावः, अनौचित्येन तदाभासः, रावणस्येव सीतायां रतेः । यद्यपि तत्र हास्यरूपतैव 'शृङ्गाराद्धि भवेद् हास्यः' इति वचनात् । तथापि पाश्चात्येयं सामाजिकानां प्रतीतिः, तन्मयीभवनदशायां तु रतेरेवास्वाद्यतेति शृङ्गारतैव भाति पौर्वापर्यविवेकावधीरणेन 'दूराकर्षण...' इत्यादौ । तदसौ शृङ्गाराभास एव ।

...अत्र न तु हास्यचर्वणावसरः । ननु नात्र रतिः स्थायिभावोऽस्ति । रत्याभासो हि सः । अतश्चाभासता येनास्य सीता मय्युपेक्षिका द्विष्टा वेति प्रतिपत्तिहृदयं न स्पृशत्येव । तत्स्पर्शे तस्याप्यनभिलाषो भवेत् । न च मयीयमनुरक्तेत्यपि निश्चयेन कृतं कामकृतान्मोहात् । अत एव तदाभासत्वं वस्तुतस्तत्र स्थाप्यते शुक्तौ रजताभासवत् । एतच्च शृङ्गारानुकृतिशब्दं प्रयुञ्जानो मुनिरपि सूचितवान् । अनुकृतिरमुख्यता आभास इतिह्येकोऽर्थः । अत एवाभिलापे एकतरनिष्ठेऽपि शृङ्गारशब्देन तत्र तत्र व्यवहारस्तदाभासतया मन्तव्यः । शृङ्गारेण वीरादीनामप्याभासतोपलक्षितैव ।

...यदा तु विभावाभासाद्रत्याभासोदयस्तदा विभावानुभासाच्चर्वणाभासः इति रसाभासस्य विषयः ।

—*Locana*, pp. 78-79; and pp. 177-179..

is Ānandavardhana. His predecessors, like Bhāmaha, Daṇḍin and Vāmana, do not refer to it though they include *rasas* and *bhāvas* generally under some of their *alaṅkāras* (sources of charm). In Ānandavardhana's new scheme, emotions in general *(cittavṛtti-viśeṣas)* may either form the main substance *(pradhāna vākyārtha)* of poetry, when they make for *dhvani* or first-rate poetry; or may play a subordinate role, making way for other emotions, when they make *rasavad-alaṅkāra* on the analogy of other *alaṅkāras*. The function of all *alaṅkāras* in poetry is to serve as effective instruments *(aṅgas)* or channels for the suggestion of emotions which alone form the ultimate substance of first-rate poetry. When the latter are subordinate, and *alaṅkāras* begin to serve as ends in themselves, poetry becomes second-rate. When the suggested emotions are entirely absent—such a possibility, however, is very remote since no expression can be entirely free from emotional association—poetry assumes the shape of pictorial acrostics *(citra)* and, strictly speaking, ceases to be poetry, though classed as third-rate poetry as a concession to the taste of pedants. In such a scheme, the function of *alaṅkāras* in good poetry is not underrated; only the over-rating of their importance is avoided. *Alaṅkāras* remain the most effective instruments to serve the end and aim of poetry, viz. emotion. But the emphasis on the end ensures that the means should never invite exclusive attention of the poet at the cost of the end. With this consciousness actively present in the poet, all *alaṅkāras* become truly *alaṅkāras* of *dhvani*, the soul of poetry, and not just outward embellishments of its body.

The above discrimination is fundamental to the new literary theory formulated by Ānandavardhana, who divides

all *alaṅkāras* into natural *(sahaja)* and artificial *(duṣkara)*. Repeated rhymes *(yamakas)* and alliterative effects *(anuprāsas)*, too many puns and paradoxes, are sure signs of artificiality, and these cannot, therefore, serve as free instruments *(aṅgas)* of the emotions *(rasas)* intended to be portrayed by the poet. It is in this connection that Ānandavardhana observes that this rule has an exception in the case of *rasābhāsas* or emotions transposed, which usually are on a par with the *rasas* themselves. Even the use of artificial figures is permissible in the case of *rasābhāsas*. While only natural figures are instruments of *rasas* in general, and its best variety, viz., *śṛṅgāra*, in particular, both natural and artificial figures may become instruments of *rasābhāsa*.[11] One is struck throughout by Ānandavardhana's special predilection for *śṛṅgāra-rasa*,[12] and it may not be far from the truth to guess that he perhaps had only *śṛṅgārābhāsa* in mind when he talked of *rasābhāsa*.

IV

Mammaṭa follows faithfully, in his *Kāvyaprakāśa*, the tradition he inherited from the *Dhvani* theorists when he describes *rasābhāsa* as arising out of impropriety *(anaucitya)*.[13] He too contents himself with illustrating

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[11] रसाभासाङ्गभावस्तु यमकादेर्न वार्यते ।
ध्वन्यात्मभूते शृङ्गारे त्वङ्गता नोपपद्यते ॥ —*Dhvanyāloka*, p. 222.

[12] Cf. Kārikā II 7 and the expression "*dhvanyātmabhūte śṛṅgāre*" which recurs in Kārikās II, 11, 15, and 17.

[13] *Loc. cit.* IV. 13.

only *śṛṅgārābhāsa* in just one verse.[14] The poet, perhaps unintentionally, leads the reader to think that the beauty, to whom the verse is meant as a compliment, has more than one lover. This suggestion smacks of impropriety and renders the verse only an *ābhāsa* of *śṛṅgāra*. Mammaṭa does not enumerate any divisions of *śṛṅgārābhāsa*, which his commentators discuss at length.[15]

V

Bhoja, in his *Śṛṅgāra-prakāśa*, brings out penetratingly the implications of Bharata and explains only *śṛṅgārābhāsa*.[16] He recognises three aspects of *rasa* :—

(1) Fully developed *(prakṛṣṭa)* in the principal hero, and hence pervading a work as a whole.

(2) Partially developed in the work, being confined to minor characters, and hence as good as *bhāva (bhāvarūpa)*.

(3) Apparent *(ābhāsa)* in as much as it is applied to lower animals, villains, etc.[17]

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[14] स्तुमः कं वामाक्षि, क्षणमपि विना यं न रमसे
विलेभे कः प्राणान्, रणमखमुखे यं मृगयसे ।
सुलग्ने को जातः शशिमुखि, यमालिङ्गसि बलात्
तपश्श्रीः कस्यैषा, मदननगरि ध्यायसि तु यम् ।

[15] These divisions were first noticed by Bhoja as we shall see in the next section.

[16] This may be due to the fact that in his system *śṛṅgāra* is the only *rasa* of which others are but variations.

[17] ....तदुपाधिश्चायमुपजायमानो रसः प्रकृष्टः, भावरूपः, आभासश्च । तत्र यः कथाशरीरव्यापिनः उत्तमनायकस्य तथाविध एव विषये जायते स प्रकृष्टः । मध्यमस्य य उपजायते, न प्रकर्षमासादयति स भावरूपः । यश्च तिरश्चां प्रतिनायकादीनां चोपजायते स श्रृङ्गाराभासः ।

—Raghavan, 'Bhoja's *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*', Vol. I, Pt. II, p. 499.

He also adds that, just as fire may be of different kinds, earthly, heavenly, gastric etc.; *rasa* too is of different kinds, *bhāva*, *rasa*, *ābhāsa* etc.[18] He is aware of *anaucitya* also.[19] But most important is that he mentions here for *for the first time* how love in lower animals leads to *rasābhāsa*.[20] This, as we shall presently see, became the starting point for later discussions.

In his other work, the *Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharaṇa*, Bhoja gives a fourfold classification of *śṛṅgārabhāsa*[21] with illustrations for each:

(1) Subsisting in low characters *(hīnapātra)*, e.g.,

विक्किण्णइ माहमासम्मि पामरो पारडिं वइल्लेण ।
दिट्ठिं समुम्मुरे सामलीअ थणए णिअच्छन्तो ।। [22]

In midwinter, the rustic is described here as buying sweet berries after selling his bullock, bewitched as he is by the shapely bosom of the black beauty who is selling them.

(2) Subsisting in lower animals *(tiryakṣu)*, e.g.,

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[18] *Op. cit.* p. 530.

[19] *Loc. cit.*

[20] i.e. *Śṛṅgārābhāsa.*

[21] हीनपात्रेषु तिर्यक्षु नायकप्रतियोगिषु ।
गौणेष्वेव पदार्थेषु तमाभासं विजानते ।। (V. 30.)

Op. cit. (K. M. Edn., 1925) p. 477.

[22] The verse is from *Gāthāsaptaśatī* of Hāla, III 38. The reading adopted here is the one given by Narendraprabhasūri in his *Alaṅkāra-mahodadhi*. He quotes Bhoja copiously (vide-*op. cit.* GOS, 1942, pp. 198-99). The *chāyā* is .—

विक्रीणीते माघमासे पामरः प्रावरकं बलीवर्देन ।
दृष्टिं समुर्मुरे श्यामल्याः स्तनके नियच्छन् ।।

पाअडिअं सोहग्गं तम्बाए उअह गोट्ठमज्झम्मि ।
दुट्ठवसहस्स संगे अच्छिउडं कंडुअंतीए ॥ [23]

A cow's singular good fortune in love is applauded here as she is seen scratching the corner of her eye happily with the horn of the naughtiest bull in the fold.

(3) Subsisting in villains *(nāyaka-pratiyogiṣu)* e. g., Rāvaṇa's passionate overtures to Sītā.

(4) Subsisting in personified (insentient) objects *(gauṇeṣu)*, e.g.,

उव्वहइ नवतणंकुर-
रोमंचपसाहिआइं अंगाइं ।
पाउसलच्छीअपओ-
हरेहिं पडिवेल्लिओ विज्झो । [24]

The rainy season and the Vindhya mountain are here personified as heroine and hero in love. The fresh–green grasses are metaphorically spoken of as the hairs of the hero standing on end in his joyful union with the heroine; and, by a pun, the clouds become identified with the heroine's bosom.

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[23] The Sanskrit *chāyā* is :—
प्रकटितं सौभाग्यं गवा पश्यत गोष्ठमध्ये ।
दुष्टवृषभस्य शृङ्गेऽक्षिपुटं कण्डूयमानया ॥
—*Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharaṇa*, p. 494.

[24] The Sanskrit rendering is :—
उद्वहति नवतृणाङ्कुर-
रोमाञ्चप्रसाधितान्यङ्गानि ।
प्रावृट्लक्ष्म्याः पयो-
धराभ्यां प्रतिप्रेरितो विन्ध्यः ॥ *(Loc. cit.)*

This last variety is indeed very popular among Sanskrit poets, including Vālmīki and Kālidāsa, who generally describe nature in human terms. Though Bhaṭṭi's example of *rasavad-alaṅkāra* in his epic poem is of this type,[25] theorists like Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin do no appear to have included them under *rasavad-alaṅkāra,* since they bring them under other *alaṅkāras* like *samāsokti* (implied metaphor). Anandavardhana is, therefore, at pains to establish that they are not void of a dominant *rasa* and deserve to be ranked on a par with *rasa-dhvani* and not on a par with *alaṅkāras* like *samāsokti.*[26] The beauty of poetic passages, where nature is endowed with human emotions,—as in descriptions of a river, a creeper, an elephant etc., by the mad Purūravas in the *Vikramorvaśīya*— lies primarily in their emotional content, and not in the device of personification *(acetane cetanatvāropa)*. In the figure of *samāsokti*, however, the device itself strikes us as more charming. All the same, it is clear that such passages cannot merit consideration as real *rasas,* since real emotions are possible only in the case of human beings. They can only be regarded as pseudo-*rasas* or *rasābhāsas.* Now, this is a significant clarification by Bhoja, *for the first time,* of a subtle point implicit in the *dhvani* theory. Unfortunately, none of the later writers took note of this important consideration in their treatment of the concept of *rasābhāsa,*

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[25] For a fuller discussion on this point, *vide*- the present writer's "The Riddle of Rasa in Sanskrit Poetics".

[26] For a complete account of this view *vide*- the present writer's English translation of the Dhvanyāloka (OBA., Poona, 1955) p. 11 ff.

except two Jaina authors, Hemacandra and Narendraprabhasūri. Though little known for originality, the latter gives some of the best examples of this variety of *rasābhāsa* in his work *Alaṅkāra-mahodadhi* (p. 198). They are :—

1. अङ्गुलीभिरिव केशसञ्चयं
   सन्निगृह्य तिमिरं मरीचिभिः ।
   कुड्मलीकृतसरोजलोचनं
   चुम्बतीव रजनीमुखं शशी ॥ [27]

Here we have the *ābhāsa* of *sambhoga-śṛṅgāra* between the Night and the Moon.

2. अनुरागवती सन्ध्या दिवसस्तत्पुरःसरः ।
   अहो दैवगतिश्चित्रा तथापि न समागमः ॥ [28]

We have here the *ābhāsa vipralambha-śṛṅgāra* between Day and Twilight. Though a stray writer's opinion, readers will see that this is a logical corollary of the axioms of the *dhvani* theory; and Bhoja deserves the credit of being the first writer to point it out. Although, in the context in which they occur, such verses can only have primacy of *vācyārtha* or beautiful moonrise, sunset, etc., and hence can be classed technically only as *alaṅkāras*, yet when appre-

[27] *Kumārasambhava*, VIII, 63 quoted by Vāmana in his *Kāvyālaṅkārasūtravṛtti* an an example of a compound figure—*utprekṣāvayava*.

[28] Quoted also in the *Dhvanyāloka*, under I, 13; but as a figure of speech. Abhinavagupta opines that it may be *samāsokti* (if Bhāmaha's view be adopted) or *ākṣepa* (if Vāmana's view be followed); quoted also by Kuntaka, Mammaṭa, Hemacandra, etc.

ciated as *muktakas* or self-contained lyrical gems, they deserve to be reckoned only as *rasābhāsas*.[29]

VI

After Bhoja, the only major writer who gives us new thought on the subject is Śāradātanaya. Unlike Bhoja and others who were busy only with the varieties of *śṛṅgārābhāsa*, Śāradātanaya bestows attention also on *ābhāsas* of *rasas* other than *śṛṅgāra*.[30] He feels that as *śṛṅgāra* turns out to be *śṛṅgārābhāsa* by the interaction of *hāsya*, so other *rasas* like *vīra* too become *ābhāsas* by their mingling with incompatible *rasas*. The disproportionate mixture of *hāsya* with *bībhatsa*, of *vīra* with *bhayānaka*, of *adbhuta* with *bībhatsa* and *karuṇa*, of *raudra* with *śoka* and *bhaya*, of *karuṇa* with h*āsya* and *śṛṅgāra*, of *bhayānka* with *raudra* and *vīra*, results respectively in the *ābhāsas* of the *hāsya*, *vīra*, *adbhuta*, *raudra*, *karuṇa* and *bhayānaka rasas*.[31]

This writer points out that actions of characters involved in unreciprocated love (e.g., Śūrpaṇakhā wooing Rāma) become comic and thus result in love transposed. Similarly, the intrusion of filth and blood will spoil *hāsya* and render it *hāsyābhāsa*. If one were to brag heroically

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29 An equally charming illustration cited by Hemacandra is the following verse of Kālidāsa (Meghadūta, I. 30):—

वेणीभूतप्रतनुसलिला तामतीतस्य सिन्धुः
पाण्डुच्छाया तटरुहतरुभ्रंशिभिर्जीर्णपर्णैः ।
सौभाग्यं ते सुभग विरहावस्थया व्यञ्जयन्ती
कार्श्यं येन त्यजति विधिना स त्वयैवोपपाद्यः ॥

30 Śāradātanaya says that he is only summarising the view of *Kalpavallī*. Who the author of this work is cannot be ascertained now.

31 *Bhāvaprakāśana* (GOS) pp. 132-3.

before women (like Uttara in the *Mahābhārata*) and take to his heels at the very sight of the battle-field, it is *vīrābhāsa*. Bloody spectacles will spoil the emotion of *adbhuta*. If a terribly heroic character, sworn to revenge, suddenly begins to tremble and weep, we get *raudrābhāsa*. If a sorrowing person were to indulge in love and laughter, it is a case of *karuṇābhāsa*. A repulsive person's love for a beautiful woman is *bībhatsābhāsā*. When a man in fear begins to talk heroic language, the result is *bhayānakābhāsa*. Thus, in all instances, Śāradātanaya finds a mixture of incompatible emotions. They all have the ridiculous effect in common. But from the standpoint of the main emotion which is caricatured, it comes to be termed *ābhāsa*. Which *rasa* is the main in a particular context, can be decided by looking at its priority in appearance, or emphasis in treatment.[32] This view deserves to be regarded as a significant contribution to the thought on *rasābhāsa*.

The above view of *rasābhāsa* is quoted with approval by Singabhūpāla in his *Rasārṇava-sudhākara*. He gives the telling analogy of an unscrupulous minister who usurps all royal powers so that the king remains no more than a figurehead; so also in a literary work an *aṅgarasa* might assume disproportionate importance and overshadow the *aṅgirasa*.[33]

VII

The second variety of *śṛṅgārābhāsa* noted by Bhoja in his *Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharaṇa*, viz., that subsisting in lower animals, provoked some criticism from medieval writers on

[32] *Op. cit.* pp. 133-4.
[33] *Ibid.* (TSS) p. 202.

Sanskrit poetics. The best illustrations for this variety are provided by Kālidāsa in his description of the effects of spring on the animal and plant world in his *Kumārasambhava* III, which are quoted by more than one writer[34]:—

मधु द्विरेफः कुसुमैकपात्रे पपौ प्रियां स्वामनुवर्तमानः ।
शृङ्गेण च स्पर्शनिमीलिताक्षीं मृगीमकण्डूयत कृष्णसारः ॥ [35]

This is a fine description of the bee's love.

ददौ रसात्पङ्कजरेणुगन्धि गजाय गण्डूषजलं करेणुः ।
अर्धोपभुक्तेन बिसेन जायां संभावयामास रथाङ्गनामा ॥ [36]

Here we have the love-life of the elephant and the *cakravāka* bird.

पर्याप्तपुष्पस्तबकस्तनाभ्यः स्फुरत्प्रवालौष्ठमनोहराभ्यः ।
लतावधूभ्यस्तरवोऽप्यवापुर्विनम्रशाखाभुजबन्धनानि ॥ [37]

This portrays love between creepers and trees.

On the analogy of this, the emotions of lower animals and rustics *(hīnapātrā* or *mleccha)*, etc., recognised by Bhoja as the first variety of *śṛṅgārābhāsa,* were being regarded as ineligible to the status of *rasa*. The first writer who voices an effective protest is Vidyādhara, the author of *Ekāvalī*. He argues strongly in favour of their being regarded as *rasas,* and attempts to refute Bhoja's theory. The following is his argument:

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[34] E.g., by Viśvanātha in his *Sāhityadarpaṇa*, Narendraprabhasūri in his *Alaṅkāramahodadhi,* and Śingabhūpāla in his *Rasārṇavasudhākara.*

[35] *Kumārasambhava* III. 36.

[36] *Ibid.*, III. 37.

[37] *Ibid.*, III. 39.

> Lower animals, too, can become *vibhāvas etc.* (objects of emotion reacting to emotional stimuli) and are, therefore, entitled to the experience of *rasa*. It might be argued that they are not conscious of *vibhāva*, etc., like human beings, and are hence unfit to have *rasa*.
>
> But not all human beings either are conscious of emotions. The emotions of such uncultured persons will also become *rasābhāsa;* and this is not acceptable. The possibility of partaking in emotion is enough to justify *rasa;* and conditions like conscious participation are uncalled for.[38]

Some late commentators of Mammaṭa's text, like Bhīmasena Dīkṣita, think that Bhoja's view is opposed to that of Mammaṭa and so attempt to refute it with similar arguments. Bhīmasena observes[39]:—

> In the case of lower animals, etc., we have only *rasa* and no *rasābhāsa,* since no impropriety is involved. Otherwise, our author (Mammaṭa) would not have pointed out the emotion of fear *(bhayānaka)* in verses like *grīvābhangābhirāmam.*[40]

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[38] 'अपरे तु रसाभासं तिर्यंक्षु प्रचक्षते । तन्न परीक्षाक्षमम् । तेष्वपि विभावादिसंभवात् । बिभावादिज्ञानशून्यास्तिर्यञ्चो न भाजनं भवितुमर्हन्ति रसस्येति चेन्न । मनुष्येष्वपि केषुचित् तथाभूतेषु रसविषयाभासप्रसङ्गात् । अत्र विभावादिसंभवोऽपि रसं प्रति प्रयोजकः, न विभावादिज्ञानम् । ततश्च तिरश्चामस्त्येव रस इति ।—Quoted by Śingabhūpāla, *Ibid.*, p. 206.

[39] वस्तुतस्तु अनौचित्यमात्रमेवामीषां मनसा आभासताप्रयोजकम् । तिर्यंगादौ त्वनौचित्याभावाद्रस एव, न तदाभासः । अत एव वृत्तिकारो 'ग्रोवाभङ्गा—' इत्यादौ तिर्यग्विषयतया भयानकं . . . उदाजहार ।

—*Sudhāsāgara* (Chowkhamba edn., p. 169.)

[40] *Abhijñāna-Śākuntala*, I; quoted in *Kāvyaprakāśa* IV.

Even Jagannātha appears to agree with this criticism, since he does not illustrate this variety of *rasābhāsa* at all in his *Rasagaṅgādhara*.[41]

VIII

Bhoja, however, found a very staunch adherent in Siṅgabhūpāla who ably silences these critics, derisively designated by him as *mlecchārasavādins*. He says :—

> It is wrong to hold that the lower animals can serve as *vibhāvas;* for Bharata has laid down that, in *śṛṅgāra,* only persons bright, pure and handsome, can serve as *vibhāvas*. No one can attribute these characteristics to the lower creatures. If it be argued that, in their case, behaviour natural to them is enough for constituting their *vibhāvatva,* this is refuted on the ground that *vibhāvatva* consists, not in animal nature, which can be called *karuṇa* (cause) at the most, but in such love as can afford joy to cultured critics. The next argument, that love of uncultured persons too would then cease to be *rasa*, is in fact no criticism, but only a statement of our own position.[42]

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[41] *Ibid.*, p. 119 ff.

[42] न तावत् तिरश्चां विभावत्वमुपपद्यते, शृङ्गारे हि समुज्ज्वलस्य शुचिनो दर्शनीयस्यैव वस्तुनो मुनिना विभावत्वेनाम्नानात् । तिरश्चामुद्वर्तनमज्जनाकल्परचनाद्यभावाद् उज्ज्वलशुचिदर्शनीयत्वानामसंभावना प्रसिद्धैव । ...किं च जातियोग्यैर्धर्मैर्वस्तुनो न विभावत्वं, अपि तु भावकचित्तोल्लासहेतुभी रतिविशिष्टैरेव । किं च विभावादिज्ञानं नामौचित्यविवेकः, तेन शून्यास्तिर्यञ्चो न विभावतां यान्ति । तर्हि विभावादिज्ञानरहितेषु मनुष्येषु रसाभासप्रसङ्ग इति चेद्, नैष दोषः । विवेकरहितजनोपलक्षणम्लेच्छगतस्य रसस्याभासत्वे स्वेष्टावाप्तेः ।

—*Rasārṇavasudhākara*, p. 206.

Vidyānātha in his *Pratāparudrīya,* and Abhinava Kālidāsa in his *Nañjarāja-yaśobhūṣāṇa* adopt this view of Śingabhūpāla without any discussion. They state in a nutshell that the *rasas*, *śṛṅgāra, vīra, raudra,* and *adbhuta,* are at their best only when subsisting in extraordinary heroes; and become caricatured into *ābhāsas* when portrayed in coarse characters.[43]

IX

There is one stray writer who holds the extreme view that *rasābhāsa* is a *doṣa,* or downright blemish. It is *Amṛtānanda-yogin,* the author of *alaṅkāra-saṅgraha.* He quotes a highly erotic verse from Kālidāsa's *Kumārasambhava,* viz., VIII 18, as an example as *rasābhāsa* and adds that the description smacks of obscenity, as a description of the amours of one's own parents.[44] Both Ānandavardhana and Mammaṭa had noticed this kind of *anaucitya* (impropriety) as a *rasadoṣa,* but they had not specifically brought it under the class of *rasābhāsa,* because while the *doṣa* is primarily repulsive to cultured taste, the *ābhāsa* is not, and might be quite appealing in spite of the impropriety. The impropriety of *doṣa* is thus different in kind from the impropriety involved in *ābhāsa,* and this discrimination is wanting in the account of Amṛtānandayogin.

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43 एकत्रैवानुरागश्चेत्तिर्यङ्म्लेच्छगतोऽपि वा ।
योषितो बहुसक्तिश्चेद्रसाभासस्त्रिधा मतः ॥
—*Pratāparudra-yaśobhūṣaṇa,* (BSS), p. 227; *Nañjarāja-yaśobhūṣaṇa* (GOS) p. 38.

44 पित्रोरिवात्र शिवयोर्नार्हं सम्भोगवर्णनम् ।
—*Alaṁkārasaṅgraha* (Adyar) p. 90.

X

Govinda, the author of *Pradīpa,* a commentary on the *Kāvyaprakāśa,* and Jagannātha speak of *rasābhāsas* other than *śṛṅgārābhāsa* even as arising out of the impropriety involved primarily in *ālambana-vibhāvas,* or characters, and illustrate them as follows :—

> When a preceptor, saint etc., is made the source of laughter, when pity is portrayed with reference to a hermit, when heroism and anger are directed against parents etc., when fear is delineated in a mighty hero, when disgust is described in instances of sacred animal sacrifice, when wonder is attributed to spectacles of magic and when tranquillity is developed in base characters— we get *ābhāsas* of emotions like *hāsya, karuṇa,* etc.[45] Such emotions may be looked upon as transposed or misapplied emotions, which have their place in the portrayal of subordinate characters in literary works.

XI

Rasābhāsas, thus, lie midway between noble sentiments and their comic degradation. They represent an intermediate stage between the sublime and the ridiculous. While such impropriety would mar the serious emotions

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[45] ......एवं गुर्वाद्यालम्वनतया हासस्य, वीतरागाद्याश्रयतया करुणस्य, पित्राद्यालम्बनतया रौद्रवीरयोः, वीरगतत्वेन भयानकस्य, यज्ञीयपशुवसाद्यालम्बनतया बीभत्सस्य, ऐन्द्रजालिकाद्यालम्बनतयाद्भुतस्य, चाण्डालादिगतत्वेन शान्तस्य चाभासत्वमूह्यम् ।
Kāvyapradīpa (KM Edn.) p. 93; cf. *Rasagaṅgādhara* (KM Edn.) p. 123.

when developed in the major characters,[46] it nonetheless becomes a virtue in the portrayal of minor characters. The concept of *rasābhāsa* thus provides us rare glimpses into Indian aesthetics and literary criticism. The region in which the Indian poet wins his widest, if not his hardest, triumph is one which John Morley significantly calls 'the region of the noble commonplace'. What he says of Shakespeare can be applied with equal truth to Kālidāsa:

> "His popularity with the many is not due to those finer glimpses that are the very essence of all poetic delight to the few, but to his thousand other magnificent attractions, and above all...to the lofty or pathetic setting with which he vivifies not the subtleties or refinements, but the commonest and most elementary traits of the commonest and most elementary human moods."[47]

The Indian concept of *rasa,* with its counterpart in *rasābhāsa,* illustrates the truth of this remark and serves as a guide-post for the appreciation of Sanskrit classics.

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[46] But Rūpagosvāmin, Kavi Karṇapūra and other later representatives of Bengal Vaiṣṇavism raised even *rasābhāsa* in the eroticism of Śrīkṛṣṇa and Gopīs to the rank of the highest *śṛṅgāra:*

Cf. यद्यप्ययं रसाभासः परोढरमणीरतिः ।
तथापि ध्वनिवैशिष्ट्यादुत्तमं काव्यमेव तत् ॥
—Quoted in *Alaṅkāra-kaustubha,* (V.R.S. edn.), p. 133.

This was objected to by traditionalists like Jagannātha. These have been left out of consideration here since they have been fully discussed by Prof. S. P. Bhattacharya in his article on *Rasābhāsa,* in the *Calcutta Oriental Journal,* Vol. II, p. 246 f., and gloss on Alaṁkāra-Kaustubha, pp. 127-8, and 131-36.

[47] J. Morley, *Critical Miscellanies,* Vol. I., p. 206.

XI

A NOVEL VIEW OF MAHIMABHAṬṬA: ON THE PLACE OF METRE IN POETRY

Mahimabhaṭṭa's *Vyaktiviveka* has not received the attention it deserves from writers on *Alaṅkāraśāstra*. While mention is often made of Mahimabhaṭṭa's polemical and peremptory peregrinations in the realm of dialectics, his positive contributions to Indian literary criticism have been left either unnoticed or underestimated. Nevertheless it remains a fact that a student who boldly ventures into the wide wilderness of Mahimabhaṭṭa's headstrong and hypercritical argumentation, will be more than rewarded for all his troubles. For, some of the observations in the *Vyaktiviveka* are quite as significant as they are strikingly novel. In the present paper, it is proposed to invite the attention of scholars to one such original and significant view of Mahimabhaṭṭa. In passing, a reference will be made also to another illuminating observation of his in connection with the propriety of *samāsas* in poetry. The main view discussed here, centres round the importance or otherwise of mechanical conformance to given metrical patterns in literary judgment.

The view that laws of metre are inviolable in poetry and that the slightest transgression of them on the poet's part will be tantamount to a most serious *doṣa* or blemish, is a long established credo not only with writers on Metrics but also with Sanskrit rhetoricians. And it acquires added strength from the practice of poets themselves, who are generally not open to the charge of metrical deficiency, notwithstanding their innumerable other omissions, perhaps

more significant.[1] While it is true that mechanical perfection to metre is not an undesirable check on the bouncing pagassus of poetic imagination, the fact cannot be forgotten that true genius will never allow itself to be cabined and cribbed by any external stranglehold. Of course no poet worth his name would try to ride roughshod over all canons of Grammar and Metre simply to show off his *licentia vatum;* nevertheless, poetic solecisms in grammar and lapses in metre are far too common to escape notice. Do they deserve unqualified censure by literary critics? That is the point at issue. Conservative critics of the traditional school had no doubts at all regarding this question. As their foremost representative we may see Daṇḍin who dogmatically declares that *bhinnavṛtta* or a lapse in metre is one of the most execrable blemishes *(eṣa doṣassuninditaḥ)* that can taint a work of literature.[2] Nor

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[1] Cf. Mallinātha's remarks while attempting to explain away Kālidāsa's usage, Viz., *dūtikṛtamārgadarśanaḥ* in *Raghuvaṁśa*, XIX, 23:—

atra ṅībantasyāpi dūtīśabdasya cchandobhaṅgabhayāddhrasvatvam kṛtaṁ, 'api māṣam maṣam kuryācchandobhaṅgaṁ tyajedgirāṁ,' ityupadeśāt.

[2] Cf. *varṇānām nyūnatādhikye gurulaghvayathāsthitiḥ /*
tatra tadbhinnavṛttaṁ syādeṣa doṣassuninditaḥ //
— *Kāvyādarśa*, III, 156

Cf. also Vāmana's *Kāvyālaṅkārasūtravṛtti*, II, ii, 1.

Equally strong are the remarks of Bhāmaha on solecisms in Grammar:

sarvathā padamapyekaṁ na nigādyamavadyavat /
vilakṣmaṇā hi kāvyena dussuteneva nindyate //
— *Kāvyālaṅkāra*, I, ii

and *bhinnavṛtta* is counted by him also as a *doṣa.*

was this view restricted only to the ancient school of rhetoricians; for even Mammaṭa, a writer belonging to the neo-school of criticism, shares it whole-heartedly.[3]

It is against this background that we have to read the remarks of Mahimabhaṭṭa to realise their refreshing originality and importance. In the opinion of Mahimabhaṭṭa, all blemishes can be brought under the general head of *anaucitya* or Impropriety which, once again, is two-fold inasmuch as it is either essential or intrinsic *(artha* or *antaraṅga-anaucitya)* or merely mechanical and extrinsic *(śabda-* or *bahiraṅga-anaucitya)*. In literary judgment, Impropriety can have reference only to the checks and hindrances upon the smooth delineation of *rasa* or sentiment and *rasas* are marred directly by *antaraṅga anaucitya* whereas indirectly by *bahiraṅga-anaucitya*. As Ānandavardhana had already dealt in detail with the first class of *anaucitya*, Mahimabhaṭṭa does not like to go over the same ground. Surprising as it might seem, he records his complete agreement with the observations of Ānandavardhana on this subject[4] and proceeds to take up the latter only for purposes of detailed exposition. At the outset he declares that *śabda-anaucitya* is fivefold: *Vidheyāvimarśa, Kramabheda, Prakramabheda, Paunaruktya* and *Vācyāvacana* and adds in the same breath this illuminating statement:—

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[3] *Vide* the *Kāvyaprakāśa*, ch. VII. Instead of *bhinnavṛtta* he employs the expression *hatavṛtta*.

[4] Cf. *tatra vibhāvānubhāvavyabhicāriṇāmayathāyathaṁ raseṣu yo viniyogaḥ tanmātralakṣaṇamekamantaraṅgamādyairevoktamiti neha pratanyate.* — *Vyaktiviveka*, p. 144 (Kashi Edn.)

For a detailed account of Ānandavardhana's treatment of *anaucityadoṣa*, *Vide* my paper bearing the same title published in the Festschrift presented to Sri K.M. Munshi, Bhāratīya Vidyā, Vol. IX.

duḥśravatvamapi vṛttasya śabdānaucityameva; tasyāpyanuprāsāderiva rasānuguṇyena pravṛtteriṣṭatvāt. Kevalaṁ vācakatvāśrayametanna bhavatīti na tattulyakakṣyatayopāttam.[5]

(Even jarring metre really deserves to be classed as verbal impropriety only inasmuch as it is admitted that the purpose of Metre also happens to be the same as the other external elements of poetry, viz., serviceability towards the evoking of sentiments. It has, however, not been included in the above classification as it does not depend solely on *śabdas*.)

What needs special attention here is the expression: *vṛttasya duḥśravatvaṁ*. Mahimabhaṭṭa is not here toeing the line with the ancients because a *duḥśrava-vṛtta* is not the same as a *bhinnavṛtta* or a *hatavṛtta*. While the latter refers to any and every technical deficiency in respect of conformance to a fixed metrical pattern, the latter has reference only to the grating or discordant notes that jar on the cultured ear. According to Mahimabhaṭṭa, then, it is not so much a metrical lapse that becomes a real blemish in poetry, but rather cacophony which may occur often in metrically correct passages also. In other words, it is the trained ear alone which can decide whether a given passage is clothed in proper metre or otherwise; not the science of Metrics.

Mahimabhaṭṭa's viewpoint is brought out still more vividly in connection with his proposed emendation of Kālidāsa's verse:

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[5] *Vyaktiviveka*, p. 152.

srastānnitambādavalambamānā
punaḥ punaḥ kesarapuṣpakāñcīṁ/
nyāsīkṛtāṁ sthānavidā smareṇa
dvitīya maurvīmiva kārmukasya//[6]

That *samāsas* always involve considerations of primary and secondary importance of the constituent members is another significant doctrine of Mahimabhaṭṭa. According to him, this consideration of *prādhānyetarabhāva* which is only of logical and technical interest in the matter of grammatical explanation of the compound words, acquires infinite significance in the realm of poetry, because it is only in poetry that the full significance of words is very deliberately exploited and manipulated by the poets so as to serve their poetic requirements. In ordinary parlance or scientific writing, the use of compounds without any special regard to the *prādhānya* or otherwise of the individual membeis may be permitted so long as there is no loss to sense, though there is bound to be some loss to significance. But in poetry, such a loss becomes unpardonable because its very essence lies in the rich significance attached to every word, nay, every member of a compound even. Thus in a *tatpuruṣasamāsa* the idiom of the language demands that the first member be rendered secondary in importance and convey the *prādhānya* of the second member only. And if a poet seeks to emphasise the first idea as well as the second, it is his duty to avoid a *samāsa* at all costs. In the example from Kālidāsa cited above, the poet is trying to offer a striking parallel to the *kesarapuṣpakāñcī* which Pārvatī is wearing through the expression *dvitīya-maurvīmiva* found in the second line; as such, the emphatic picture of the *dvitīyatva* of *maurvī* must get equal emphasis,

[6] *Kumārasambhava*, III, 55.

which it does not get as the first member of a *samāsa*. Hence Mahimabhaṭṭa desires that the word should be emended into *maurvīṁ dvitīyāṁ* in the text so that the emphatic significance of the word as a parallel to *kāñcī* be preserved intact. The altered reading would violate the demands of metre according to Mahimabhaṭṭa as there would be a mixing up of *Indravajrā* and *Upendravajrā* metres without any system. In the first half of the verse, we have *Indravajrā* in the first line and *Upendravajrā* in the second line. In view of rigorous symmetry, we would expect a similar combination in the second half also, i.e. of *Indravajrā* in the third line and *Upendravajrā* in the fourth. While the reading *dvitīyamaurvīṁ* would satisfy this condition, the proposed reading *maurvīṁ dvitiyāṁ* will not. But Mahimabhaṭṭa asserts that one need not be too touchy about mere mechanical symmetry so long as there is no offence to the ear. His own words are:

> *na caivaṁ vṛttabhaṅgaśaṅkā kāryā, tasya śravyatvamātralakṣaṇatvāt; tadapekṣayaiva Vasantatilakādāviva gurvantatāniyamasya sakarṇakairatrāpyanādṛtatvāt. ata eva yamakānuprāsayoriva vṛttasyāpi śabdālaṅkāratvamupagatamasmābhiḥ.*[7]

[7] A perusal of the available treatises on Metrics, however, shows that the verse in question is written in the *Upajāti-vṛtta* which can include according to theory all the fourteen possible interminglings of the *Indravajrā* and *Upendravajrā* feet. Thus understood, even the suggested reading of Mahimabhaṭṭa will not spoil the accuracy of the *Upajāti-vṛtta*. This may lead us to think that in practice the poets observed some principle, unrecorded though, in the mingling of feet of these two metres. But this conjecture also is falsified by the practice of Kālidāsa himself in the II Canto of his *Raghuvaṁśa* and the III Canto of his *Kumārasambhava* where we find almost all

— *Continued Next Page.*

In fact, as we all know, the well-known metre *Vasantatilakā* has a final short syllable instead of the long one in the works of almost all Sanskrit poets. The rigid rule of Metrics demanding a long syllable at the end of each foot is observed more in its violation than in fulfilment.[8] No one who has an ear to harmony would object to such usages of the poets. Mahimabhaṭṭa only pleads for an extension of this universally recognised freedom in matters of Metre. He regards the various metres to be just on a par with verbal figures of speech like Alliteration and Rhyme; and allots them no higher place in the province of poetry. Mahimabhaṭṭa would be glad to allow the poet the same freedom in the choice of Metre and in their manipulation as the poet has always enjoyed in the employment of *Yamakas* and *Anuprāsas*.[9]

— *Continued from Page 142.*

combinations of these. The only other alternatives we are left with are: Either Mahimabhaṭṭa was not a good student of Metrics or Metrics as he knew did not allow of such combinations, though they were very much in vogue among poets. The latter possibility seems to gain strength in view of the fact that later commentators gave *Upajāti* the widest significance by including even a combination of *vṛttas* other than *Indravajrā* and *Upendravajrā* under it. (*Vide* Piṅgala's *Cchandassūtra*, VI, 15-17 and *Vṛtta-ratnākara* III 4 with the com. of Śrīnātha thereon).

8 Even here the rule is not at all rigid if we take into consideration such late works on Metrics as the *Śrutabodha* which gives the convenient rule:

vijñeyamakṣaraṁ guru pādāntasthaṁ vikalpena. (I. 2)

9 Even Bhoja whose conception of *śabdālaṅkāra* is the most comprehensive known to Sanskrit Poetics, does not include *vṛtta* under it; he speaks, however, of *bhinnavṛtta-sargatva* as a *śabdālaṅkāra* of *Prabandha*. But it is a point altogether different. (Cf. Dr. V. Raghvan, *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*, p. 363 and p. 413).

It is indeed a commonplace to students of English Metre that the greatness of individual poets is often estimated on the success of new modifications introduced by them into well-known verse-patterns. In our own country, such a view has never found favour or following. All the same, Mahimabhaṭṭa deserves due credit for his bold, though forlorn, attempt at raising the issue and at indicating the direction in which the truth lies.

In the nature of things, Metrics can never be a positive science. Indian writers on metre have always recognised this truth as they indicate the innumerable, though unworked, posibilities of metrical combinations alongside of defining the well-known *vṛttas* or patterns. It is indeed a standing challenge of Metrics to the genius of poets to evolve new and evernew harmonies. As in Classical Indian Music, so in Classical Sanskrit Poetry, can we not trace the cause of decline and decadence to the refusal on the part of genius to take up the challenge?

XII

THE DOCTRINE OF DOṢAS IN SANSKRIT POETICS

An attempt is made in this paper to trace the development of the concept *doṣas* in the history of Sanskrit poetics.

Bharata

The sixteenth chapter of Bharata's *Nāṭya-śāstra* gives us for the first time an outline of *doṣas* along with other topics pertaining to Sanskrit poetics. Here we meet with a list of ten *doṣas*—गूढार्थ, अर्थान्तर, अर्थहीन, भिन्नार्थ, एकार्थ, अभिप्लुतार्थ, न्यायादपेत, विषम, विसन्धि and शब्दहीन. Bharata's immediate concern was *nāṭya-śāstra* or dramaturgy and his treatment of *guṇas*, *doṣas* and *alaṅkāras*, comes in only incidentally. His central theme is *rasa* which is the all-important element in any drama. The other elements such as *guṇa* are subordinated to the principal purpose of achieving *rasa* in a drama. That the former elements came to be treated in his work at all was by reason of the fact that they constituted what he calls *vācikābhinaya* which in its turn forms an important factor, the *anubhāva*, in awakening *rasa*.

It is clear, then, that Bharata's conception of *doṣas* has in view the *rasas* which it is his main aim to explain. One other important thing to be noted in this connection is that Bharata has expressly given the *doṣas* a positive value besides their inherent negative capacity. Bharata says that the *guṇas* are none other than the opposites of *doṣas*.[1] One

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[1] गुणा विपर्ययादेषाम् ।

would normally expect that *guṇas* should be explained as positive excellences whose negations constitute *doṣas*. But in Bharata it is the other way about. And this is quite in keeping with the common-sense view of things. For it is not difficult for one to seize upon a fault instinctively and realise its substance, while an excellence cannot be conceived unless its essence is comprehended by differentiating it from a fault which is generally more easily understood.

At this stage, it may also be noted in passing that the classification of *śabdadoṣas* and *arthadoṣas*, a commonplace of later theorists, is conspicuous by its absence in Bharata though his definition of *visandhi* has in its view *śabdas* more than *arthas*. Furthermore, the ten *doṣas* are not called *rasadoṣas* though, as we have seen, they are ultimately related to *rasa*. On the other hand, they are merely called *kāvya-doṣas*. This indicates the rudimentary nature of poetics in the age of Bharata; and that is why we do not meet here with a detailed treatment of *anaucitya*, the chief deterrent of *rasa*, which was highly elaborated later by the *Dhvanikāra* and others.

Bhāmaha

Next we may pass on to Bhāmaha, the author of *Kāvyālaṅkāra* who, unlike Bharata, treats of poetics as an independent subject. Bhāmaha has enumerated two sets of *doṣas*—one in the first chapter of his work and the other in the fourth. The first set consists of ten *doṣas*—नेयार्थ, क्लिष्ट, अन्यार्थ, अवाचक, गूढशब्दाभिधान, अयुक्तिमत्, श्रुतिदुष्ट, अर्थदुष्ट and कल्पनादुष्ट. These are mentioned in a context where he has been discussing the general characteristics of poetry. The statement which immediately precedes the enumeration of these *doṣas* is:—वक्राभिधेयशब्दोक्तिरिष्टा वाचामलङ्कृतिः । "A devious or artful

presentation of meaning and words is desirable in virtue of their constituting figures of speech." Then he proceeds to give the list of *doṣas*, *neyārtha* etc. If our interpretation of the later ślokas is to be in keeping with the previous remarks of Bhāmaha, we shall have to say that these eleven *doṣas* represent faults in artful locution which in its turn has been described as the essence of ornament in poetry. Not any and every peculiarity in the turn of expression will acquire the status of ornament. Expressions too far-fetched should be avoided scrupulously. In particular, *neyārtha* and others are the veritable pitfalls which a poet should guard against. Thus, it will be seen, Bhāmaha's first list of *doṣas* may be more aptly described as *vakroktidoṣas* than as *kāvyadoṣas*.

The faults discussed by Bhāmaha in his second list are eleven viz., अपार्थं, व्यर्थं, एकार्थं, ससंशय, अपक्रम, शब्दहीन, यतिभ्रष्ट, विसन्धि, देशकालकलालोकन्यायागमविरोधि and प्रतिज्ञाहेत्वादिहीन. These constitute the *doṣas par excellence* in any *kāvya*, according to Bhāmaha. While the first list of *doṣas* concerns *vakrokti*, the inner nature or essence of poetry, the second mentions only such defects as are more or less external.

A glance at the two lists of faults, given by Bharata and Bhāmaha respectively, will at once show that while some of Bhāmaha's faults correspond generally to Bharata's in name or in substance (e.g. *ekārtha*, *visandhi*), Bhāmaha in his elaborate system is certainly ahead of his predecessor.

This is particularly illustrated in Bhāmaha's elucidation that a fault is not always a fault. Bharata, as we have already seen, insists that *doṣas* are positive entities which can never be permitted to creep into a good *kāvya*. Bhāmaha, on the other hand, makes some allowances even with regard to technical defects. He does not agree with

Bharata that they are positive entities universally marring the poetic effect. Contrariwise, he even goes to the extent of maintaining that a fault is sometimes converted into an excellence. For instance, the blemish of *ekārtha* (redundance) will indeed heighten the poetic effect in special circumstances instead of marring it when the word in question (e.g. गच्छ गच्छ) is repeated under the pressure of fear, sorrow and jealousy (भयशोकाभ्यसूयासु) as also of delight and wonder (हर्षविस्मययोरपि). It is interesting to note here that Bhāmaha's successors found herein a broad hint regarding the impermanence in the character of *doṣa*, and they carried the scheme further, each in his own way, as we shall have occasion to see below.

Regarding the *vakrokti-doṣas* (as we have termed them) also, Bhāmaha allows some margin though he does not go as far as assigning to them the high place of *guṇas*. He says that even flaws look well —though they do not become positive merits— when placed in a particular context or situation even as a blue flower acquires beauty when strung in the middle of a garland. He also cites in support of this thesis the instance of collyrium (a thing without beauty in itself) acquiring charm in the eyes of a lovely damsel.[2]

Before we pass on to consider Daṇḍin's treatment of *doṣas*, it may not be out of place to point out that even Bharata has not given us any clear-cut classification of *doṣas* into पद, वाक्य, शब्द and अर्थ as is done by later writers. And

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[2] *Cf.* सन्निवेशविशेषात्तु दुरुक्तमपि शोभते ।
नीलं पलाशमाबद्धमन्तराले स्रजामिव ॥
किञ्चिदाश्रयसौन्दर्याद् धत्ते शोभामसाध्वपि ।
कान्ताविलोचनन्यस्तं मलीमसमिवाञ्जनम् ॥

—*I. 54-55, Kāvyālaṅkāra.*

in his enumeration are included faults belonging to words as well as to sense.

Bhāmaha, it must also be observed, is very eloquent on the disrepute which *doṣas* bring an author. He says, "Not even a single faulty word is to be allowed in a composition. It verily brings discredit to the author even as a degenerate son to the father. Abstention from poetizing is no crime and it does not entail any punishment or disease. But bad composition indeed is spoken of as veritable death by the learned."[3]

Bhāmaha regards *upamā* so important in his scheme of *alaṅkāras* that he goes to the extent of defining and illustrating the *doṣas* that are possible in connection with it. The number of these *upamādoṣas* is seven and it appears that Medhāvin was their earliest propounder. The seven *doṣas* are—हीनता, असम्भव, लिङ्गभेद, वचोभेद, विपर्यय, उपमानाधिकत्व and असदृशता.

Daṇḍin

Daṇḍin is even more vehement and emphatic than Bhāmaha in holding that even a slight defect is sure to mar the effect of poetry just as a single leprous spot is sufficient to render a handsome body ugly and hence it should not be endured.[4] He says, "A word well used

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3 सर्वथा पदमप्येकं न निगाद्यमवद्यवत् ।
विलक्ष्मणा हि काव्येन दुस्सुतेनेव निन्द्यते ॥
नाकवित्वमधर्माय व्याधये दण्डनाय वा ।
कुकवित्वं पुनः साक्षान्मृतिमाहुर्मनीषिणः ॥—*I. 11-12, Ibid.*

4 तदल्पमपि नोपेक्ष्यं काव्ये दुष्टं कथञ्चन ।
स्याद्वपुः सुन्दरमपि श्वित्रेणैकेन दुर्भगम् ॥—*Kāvyādarśa 1. 7.*

is declared by the wise to be the wish-fulfilling cow; the same ill-used, however, declares the user's bovine nature."[5]

In the third chapter of the *Kāvyādarśa*, Daṇḍin enumerates ten *doṣas* which are, in name, substance and even the order of enumeration, identical with Bhāmaha's second list of *doṣas* noted above, with the only exception of the eleventh, namely, of defective logic which is recognised by Bhāmaha though rejected by Daṇḍin as a fault difficult to judge and unprofitable to discuss. The question whether errors in syllogistic conclusion probans and illustration are to be regarded as blemishes in poetry or not is, according to Daṇḍin, out of place in a book on poetics. The problem is a purely technical one and belongs mainly to the domain of logic and a dry discussion of it in poetics would be both inappropriate and useless.[6] In view of the fact that Bhāmaha mentions and illustrates these *doṣas* in this very order in great detail, some scholars have tried to conclude that the remarks of Daṇḍin are directed against Bhāmaha, his predecessor in the history of Sanskrit poetics.

With regard to Bhāmaha's first list of faults (which we have designated *vakroktidoṣas*) which concern the very essence of poetry, these correspond in general to the *doṣas* (or rather the opposites of *guṇas*) which Daṇḍin mentions as absent in the *Vaidarbhamārga* and as characterising its opposite or *Gauḍamārga*. For example the opposite of *kānti* is *atyukti*, and *neyatva* is the opposite of *arthavyakti*. These

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5 गौर्गौः कामदुघा सम्यक्प्रयुक्ता स्मर्यते बुधैः ।
दुष्प्रयुक्ता पुनर्गोत्वं प्रयोक्तुः सैव शंसति ॥—*Ibid.*, *i. 6.*

6 प्रतिज्ञाहेतुदृष्टान्तहानिर्दोषो न वेत्यसौ ।
विचारः कर्कशप्रायस्तेनालीढेन किं फलम् ॥—*Ibid.*, *iii 127.*

latter are, as we have seen, regarded by Bhāmaha as faults. Thus though Daṇḍin does not mention Bhāmaha's first list of ten *doṣas* as well as most of Bharata's original ten *doṣas*, he could not very well avoid referring to some of those essential *doṣas* at least in passing, notwithstanding the fact that he does not define and distinguish them. It follows from the above that Daṇḍin wanted to adhere to the conventional number of ten *doṣas* though he was aware of other *doṣas* of which he did not altogether disapprove.

Like Bhāmaha, Daṇḍin too does not enter into the question first raised by Bharata as to whether the *doṣas* in poetics are positive entities or mere negations of *guṇas*. Bharata holds that *guṇas* signify nothing more than the negative condition of *doṣābhāva* so that *doṣas* are, in his opinion, positive entities from which the *guṇas* are known by implication. It is clear from Daṇḍin's treatment, however, that he mentions (in chapter IV) the external faults apparently as positive entities after the manner of Bhāmaha.

In the case of *upamādoṣas*, Daṇḍin has some improvements to suggest over Bhāmaha's treatment of them. Bhāmaha blindly accepted Medhāvin's catalogue of *upamādoṣas* without adding anything of his own. And to this Daṇḍin demurs. He is of opinion that the presence of such inconsistencies as विपर्यय, असादृश्य and असम्भव in a piece of poetry entails as such the absence of *upamā* in them. Hence it is meaningless to call them *upamādoṣas*. They are impossible in any piece which is in accordance with the definition of *upamā* as laid down earlier.[7] And even as regards the other four *doṣas* treated by Bhāmaha, namely

7 यथाकथञ्चित्सादृश्यं यत्रोद्भूतं प्रतीयते ।
उपमा नाम सा तस्याः प्रपञ्चोऽयं प्रदर्श्यते ॥—*Ibid.*, *ii*, *14*.

हीनता, अधिकत्व, लिङ्गभेद and वचोभेद, Daṇḍin declares that they are not always *doṣas* or detractors of beauty in a simile, and supports his claim with apt instances. He concludes that the criterion which decides whether there are *doṣas* or not in a particular context is none other than the taste of the refined. If they offend the taste of the cultured, then alone can they be termed as *doṣas*, not otherwise.[8] He also gives instances when they act as deterrents of poetic effect and remarks that under such circumstances they must be eschewed. The reason, he says, goes without saying.[9]

Thus, though Daṇḍin has here and there tried to improve upon Bhāmaha, he remains in essence a follower of his, and like him, he does not venture upon any original treatment of the subject of poetic flaws either with reference to their nature or number. Though he criticises some older views, and he views the whole thing from a different and more original standpoint, still it will be in vain if we look forward to find in his work any clear-cut classification of the *doṣas* on scientific principles. In the main, he adheres to the traditional number of the ten *doṣas* and does not like to deviate from it.

Vāmana

Vāmana's work, in comparison with Daṇḍin's and Bhāmaha's shows further progress and elaboration of the ideas discussed above. The vague and unsystematic treatment of *doṣas* in the earlier writers now loses that character

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[8] *Cf.* न लिङ्गवचने भिन्ने न हीनाधिकतापि वा ।
उपमादूषणायालं यत्रोद्वेगो न धीमताम् ॥—*Ibid., ii, 51.*

[9] *Cf.* ईदृशं वर्ज्यते सद्भिः कारणं तत्र चिन्त्यताम् ।
गुणदोषविचाराय स्वयमेव मनीषिभि ॥—*Ibid., ii, 56.*

for the first time in Vāmana in so far as the *doṣas* are fully developed and carefully set forth by him.

As the means of arriving at poetic beauty, in Vāmana's opinion, is the avoidance of *doṣas* and the utilization of *guṇas* and *alaṅkāras*, Vāmana, like his predecessors, lays down at the outset that poetry must be free from *doṣas*.[10] *Doṣahāna* gains precedence over that of *guṇādāna* in achieving the poetic effect. The *Kāmadhenu* finds a justification for this. It quotes the well-known maxim "इष्टानुवर्तनात्कुर्यात्प्रागनिष्टनिवर्तनम्" in support of its position that the poet must first endeavour to banish all flaws from his compositions before setting about to add beauty to it. The removal of the undesirable is indeed the pre-requisite which paves the way for the desirable.[11]

Then Vāmana devotes a whole chapter (the द्वितीयाधिकरण) for the consideration of the *doṣas* and calls it by the name of *doṣadarśana:* 'A Notice of Defects'. The very first *sūtra* in this chapter is "गुणविपर्ययात्मानो दोषाः" 'Defects are those elements whose characteristics are opposite to those of the *guṇas*.' This goes flatly against the theory of Bharata who, as we have seen, held just the opposite view. For the first time in the history of Sanskrit poetics, Vāmana has expressly set at naught the authority of Bharata and asserted a contrary thesis. The positive elements in poetic composition are *guṇas* and not the *doṣas* which are merely negations of *guṇas*.

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10 *Cf.* काव्यं ग्राह्यमलङ्कारात् । सौन्दर्यमलङ्कारः । स दोषगुणालङ्कारहानादानाभ्याम्—*Kāvyālaṅkārasūtra, I, i. 1-3.*

11 *Cf.* इष्टानुवर्तनात्कुर्यात्प्रागनिष्टनिवर्तनमिति नीत्या गुणालङ्कारादानात्पूर्वं दोषहानमेव कविना कर्तव्यमिति सूचयितुं दोषहानस्य प्रथमतो निर्देशः कृतः—*Kāvyālaṅkāra-kāmadbenu,* under I. i. 3.

At this stage one is apt to raise an objection that since *guṇas* are positive elements in poetry, an exposition of them in the first instance entails as a logical consequence an inkling into the precise nature of defects, their negations, and therefore a chapter need not be unnecessarily wasted on *doṣas*, and that too, to treat of the *doṣas* before treating of *guṇas* is highly unwarranted. Vāmana anticipates such an objection on the part of the reader and answers him by saying that though the objection is well founded, practical considerations demand that the *doṣas* must be given separate treatment.[12] The precise nature of *doṣas* becomes clear to students only when they are enunciated, defined and classified scientifically, not otherwise.[13] Hence it is evident that the main object of Vāmana was to give a thorough-going and well-defined treatment of the *doṣas* as distinguished from the rough and ready treatment of these by his predecessors.

Poetry may become tainted with flaws either because the communication is defective and the vehicle inoperative or because the experience or idea communicated is worthless though the possibility of a presence of both the *doṣas* in a particular context is not precluded. The vehicle of communication may become defective either by virtue of the individual words comprising it or by reason of the sentence as a whole which represents it. On the whole, then, a four-fold classification of *doṣas* is possible—viz., i. *pada-doṣas* (flaws relating to words), ii. *padārtha-doṣas* (flaws relating to meanings of words), iii. *vākya-doṣas* (flaws characterising sentences) and iv. *vākyārtha-doṣas* (flaws disfiguring

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[12] *Cf.* अर्थतस्तदवगमः; किमर्थं ते पृथक्प्रपञ्चयन्त इत्यत्राह—
'सौकर्याय पप्रञ्चः' ।—*op. cit.*

[13] *Cf.* उद्दिष्टा लक्षणलक्षिता हि दोषाः सुज्ञाता भवन्ति ।—*op. cit.*

the sense of sentences). Such is the classification which Vāmana proposes. And it marks a notable improvement over that of his predecessors. Later writers like Mammaṭa have appreciated the merits of this scientific classification and adopted the scheme as standardized by Vāmana in their own treatment of the *doṣas*.

The *pada-doṣas* according to Vāmana are five in number—viz., असाधु, कष्ट, ग्राम्य, अप्रतीत and अनर्थक. The *padārtha-doṣas* are also five viz., अन्यार्थ, नेयार्थ, गूढार्थ, अश्लील and क्लिष्ट. भिन्नवृत्त, यतिभ्रष्ट and विसन्धि form the *vākya-doṣas* while व्यर्थ, एकार्थ, सन्दिग्ध, अयुक्त, अपक्रम, लोकविरुद्ध and विद्याविरुद्ध constitute the *vākyārtha-doṣas*. It is clear that even Vāmana is as scrupulous as his forerunners in adhering to the traditional number of ten inasmuch as his *pada-* and *padārtha- doṣas* on the one hand and his *vākya-* and *vākyārtha- doṣas* on the other are exactly ten, neither more nor less.

A comparison of Vāmana's catalogue of *doṣas* with that of Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin shows us that he has not added anything new to the existing number of *doṣas*. His originality consists in his redistribution of them on certain basic principles and that is all that can be said to his credit. Though theoretically Vāmana follows his predecessors in his treatment of the *doṣas*, he practically doubles their number.

At the close of Vāmana's chapter on *doṣas* we read—
"एते वाक्यवाक्यार्थदोषास्त्यागाय ज्ञातव्याः । ये त्वन्ये शब्दार्थदोषाः सूक्ष्माः, ते गुणविवेचने वक्ष्यन्ते उपमादोषाश्चोपमाविचार इति ।"
It is stated here that Vāmana proposes to elucidate the *sūkṣma-doṣas* in connection with his consideration of the *guṇas*. On the basis of this the *Kāmadhenu* concludes that all the *doṣas* treated so far are to be taken as *sthūla-doṣas*.[14]

[14] Cf. अस्मिन्नधिकरणे लक्षणीया दोषाः काव्यस्यासाधुत्वापादकाः स्थूला इत्यवगन्तव्यम् —*Kāvyālaṅkārakāmadhenu*, on II. i. 3.

It explains the word *sūkṣma-doṣas* as those which are not competent enough to destroy the poetic effect. For instance the opposite of *ojoguṇa* is a *sūkṣma-doṣa*, a flaw which is almost imperceptible and hence negligible.[15] The *sthūla-doṣas* refer to those general defects which mar poetic beauty in general in the same way as the *guṇas* enhance it. The *sūkṣma-doṣas* correspond to the opposites of the technical *guṇas* whose presence constitutes an element of charm in poetry. Though they do not mar the poetic beauty in the same way as the *sthūla-doṣas*, they must be avoided in the best kind of poetry. Here also Vāmana is indebted to Daṇḍin who too speaks of *doṣas* which are opposite of *guṇas*. But (the fact of) giving them the name of *sūkṣma-doṣas* indicating thereby their negligible nature is Vāmana's original contribution.

As regards the question of *upamā-doṣas* also, Vāmana has nothing new to add. He merely enumerates and illustrates the *doṣas* catalogued by Bhāmaha, excepting one viz. *viparyaya*. This indicates that he has been influenced by Daṇḍin in his rejection of the *viparyaya-doṣa*.

Rudraṭa

The next writer of note is Rudraṭa, the author of the *Kāvyālaṅkāra*. A noteworthy feature of his treatment is that he follows Bharata in holding that *guṇas* are contraries of *doṣas* as against the view of his immediate predecessor Vāmana. Hence *guṇas*, as such, do not receive at his hands

[15] सूक्ष्माः काव्यसौन्दर्याक्षेपानतिक्षमाः । 'ओजोविपर्ययात्मा दोषः' इत्यारभ्य तदुदाहरणप्रत्युदाहरणाभ्यां वक्ष्यन्ते—*op. cit.*

any analytical exposition. His so-called *guṇas* are all negations of faults.[16]

In the enumeration of *doṣas* also Rudraṭa follows a principle, slightly different from that of Vāmana. Taking *śabda* and *artha* as the two elements of poetry he mentions *doṣas* in two series—(1) *śabda-doṣas* or defects of words, (2) *artha-doṣas* or defects of sense. The first series includes nine faults viz., (i) six *pada-doṣas*—असमर्थ, अप्रतीत, विसन्धि, विपरीतकल्पना, ग्राम्य and देश्य and (ii) three *vākya-doṣas*—सङ्कीर्ण, गर्भित and गतार्थ। The second series comprises (besides four *upamā-doṣas*) nine faults again viz., अपहेतु, अप्रतीत, निरागम, बाधयत्, असम्बद्ध, ग्राम्य, विरस, तद्वन and अतिमात्र। Some of these *doṣas* like *tadvān*, are, it must be noted, mentioned for the first time by Rudraṭa.

Ānandavardhana

After the advent of the *dhvani* theorists like Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta the *doṣas* (like the *guṇas*) came to be related to the *rasa*, the poetic effect in a composition, and began to be defined as that which prevents or hinders the manifestation of *rasa*. The doctrine of *doṣa* was taken along with the doctrine of *guṇa*, of which it formed the counterpart and was considered from the standpoint of *rasa* alone. They were no longer absolute entities but attributes or absence of attributes relative to the development of *rasa*, and must therefore be governed by the theory of *Aucitya* or propriety which these theorists put forward in their treatment of *rasa*.[17] It is a triumph of the *dhvani* school

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[16] *Cf.* अन्यूनाधिकवाचकसुक्रमपुष्टार्थशब्दचारुपदम् ।
क्षोदक्षममक्षुण्णं सुमतिर्वाक्यं प्रयुञ्जीत ।।—*Kāvyālaṅkāra*, ii. 8.

[17] *Cf.* अनौचित्यादृते नान्यद्रसभङ्गस्य कारणम् ।
प्रसिद्धौचित्यबन्धस्तु रसस्योपनिषत्परा ।।—*Dhvanyāloka*, ch. III.

that it was able to define properly the place of the concepts of *rasa, rīti, guṇa, doṣa* and *alaṅkāra* in its comprehensive theory.

In the theory of Ānandavardhana much importance was given to the individual taste of the *sahṛdaya* which alone was the criterion to judge *doṣas* in particular contexts. Hence he does not embark upon any hair-splitting distinction and classification of *doṣas*. Such a procedure is not only avoided by Ānandavardhana, but he even goes to the extent of saying that it would reflect on the rudeness of the critic. Even in the works of masters, blemishes are bound to creep in; but they need not be catalogued, overshadowed as they are by the thousand and one excellences.[18]

This is quite a happy idea and when we see that pedantic poets blatantly disregarded the advice of the rhetoricians in the avoiding of blemishes catalogued by them, we feel that all the energy and zeal of the ancients devoted in making nice distinctions of *doṣas* was mis-spent. There was a yawning gulf between theory and actual practice which it was futile to bridge unless good sense dawned on the poets themselves. And it is this which Ānandavardhana strenuously attempts to do. He wants to steer clear of the trash that had accumulated in the course of centuries round the natural, fresh and pellucid literature of old and to revive the original beauty once again. He sheds a beacon of light on the poetic pieces

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[18] *Cf.* ननु सूक्तिसहस्रद्योतितात्मनां महात्मनां दोषोद्घोषणमात्मन एव दूषणं भवतीति न विभज्य दर्शितम् ।।—*Ibid.*, p. 94.

Cf. also Kālidāsa's—

'एको हि दोषो गुणसन्निपाते निमज्जतीन्दोः किरणेष्विवाङ्कः' ।

Kumārasambhava

of earlier as well as later writers and makes the reader grasp the essence of beauty in them. All the later theorists were completely convinced of Ānandavardhana's theory in the main and adopted it in their works. But it is once again disheartening to notice that the theory did not have any considerable effect on the contemporary writers in Sanskrit. The majority of them were revelling in the intricate maze of tropes, figures and technical excellences, as fully as ever. They did not hesitate to sacrifice poetic effect at the altar of intellectual gymnastics. They wanted to startle the reader by their supreme *tour de force* rather than delight him with aesthetic pleasure. This tendency in the writers of the later classical Sanskrit literature, indeed, was mostly responsible for the decline and fall of the pellucid, sweet and fresh idiom of the Sanskrit language. The genius of the language began to be exploited for pedantic ends rather than for aesthetic appeal. The credit of having sounded the timely warning to them undoubtedly goes to Ānandavardhana although it fell on deaf ears.

Kuntaka

Next we may take up Kuntaka. His work is unique in the history of Sanskrit poetics. He brought to bear on his study a taste for delight and a gift of sharing his delight, unrivalled in the range of Sanskrit writers. His insight into literature is surprisingly sharp and he has the vary rare capacity of analysing things and after a searching examination of every element, laying his finger precisely on the points which give rise to pleasure. As a natural sequence, anything that is shoddy or misplaced at once catches his eye. It is true that in the portions of the

Vakroktijīvita now extant, he does not treat at length of any doctrine of flaws. But his shrewd observations scattered here and there throughout his book are enough to indicate his point of view. His idea of poetry is, indeed expressed in such terms as might win universal acceptance. Kuntaka describes the nature of the best road to poetry in these words—

"The high road of poetry along which have trod the greatest of poets is one where words and meanings acquire ever new shades as a result of the fresh genius of the poet; which is embellished but little by figures and where excellences are not strained; where the skill and effort of the poet are made invisible by the abundance of feelings and natural descriptions; which brings aesthetic delight to the minds of men of taste; where the identity of parts is lost in the enjoyment of the whole; which is comparable only to the ingenious creation of Brahma in point of variety and beauty; and where, whatever the poetic effect, everything is the result of the poet's genius."[19]

Kuntaka then gives the significant name of graceful (*sukumāra*) to this kind of poetry. Then he goes on to define the various poetic elements to be found in this kind

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[19] *Cf.* अम्लानप्रतिभोद्भिन्ननवशब्दार्थबन्धुरः ।
अयत्नविहितस्वल्पमनोहारिविभूषणः ॥
भावस्वभावप्राधान्यन्यक्कृताहार्यकौशलः ।
रसादिपरमार्थज्ञमनस्संवादसुन्दरः ॥
अविभावितसंस्थानरामणीयकरञ्जकः ।
विधिवैदग्ध्यनिष्पन्ननिर्माणातिशयोपमः ॥
यत्किञ्चनापि वैचित्र्यं तत्सर्वं प्रतिभोद्भवम् ।
सौकुमार्यपरिस्पन्दस्यन्दि यत्र विराजते ॥
सुकुमाराभिधस्सोऽयं येन सत्कवयो गताः ।
मार्गेणोत्फुल्लकुसुमकाननेनेव षट्पदाः ॥
—*Vakrokti-jīvita*, I. 25-29.

of poetry as माधुर्य, लावण्य, आभिजात्य, सौभाग्य and औचित्य. When discussing the nature of this last characteristic, Kuntaka incidentally draws attention to two blemishes in the composition of Kālidāsa, which, he says, are glaring. One of them is in the *Raghuvaṁśa* (xiii. 52)

पुरं निषादाधिपतेस्तदेतद्यस्मिन्मया मौलिमणिं विहाय ।
जटासु बद्धास्वरुदत्सुमन्त्रः कैकेयि कामाः फलितास्तवेति ॥

Here Kuntaka points out how the words 'Kaikeyi, be content now that your desires are fulfilled' in the mouth of Rāma, not an ordinary man, but a hero endowed with all the virtues going with a noble hero, are highly out of place since those words go to suggest the mean nature and narrow outlook of the person speaking.[20]

The other passage in which Kuntaka points out a defect of impropriety is from Kālidāsa's *Kumārasambhava* (iii. 7):—

कामेकपत्नीं व्रतदुःखशीलां लोलं मनश्चारुतया प्रविष्टाम् ।
नितम्बिनीमिच्छसि मुक्तलज्जां कण्ठे स्वयंग्राहनिषक्तबाहुम् ॥

Here the context is this. Indra has called for Manmatha to entrust him with the duty of sowing seeds of love in the heart of Śiva, the ultimate end in view being the destruction of Tāraka and his hordes. In the stanza in question, as soon as he makes his appearance, Manmatha is said to have boasted of changing the mind of even the most devoted of wives so as to make her fall in instantaneous love with Indra. One will be led to gather the impression that Indra takes it as a compliment since he

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[20] *Cf.* अत्र रघुपतेरनर्घमहापुरुषसम्पदुपेतत्वेन वर्ण्यमानस्य 'कैकेयि कामाः फलितास्तव' इत्येवंविधतुच्छतरपदार्थसंस्मारणं तदभिधानं च अत्यन्तमनौचित्यमावहति ।—*Ibid.*

does not stop Manmatha from saying such impolite words. This certainly takes away much of Indra's prestige, the lord of the three worlds as he is, and hence is highly inappropriate.[21]

Kuntaka for the first time tries to answer the question whether the presence of defects, say *anaucitya*, in a particular place, mars the poetic effect of that single part or the whole poem as such. He is of opinion that the whole poem becomes tainted as a result of a fault attaching to a part of it. The illustration he cites is apt. A fine silk garment, when it gets burnt though at a single spot, will itself, as a whole, lose its beauty and merit. So with fine poetry also.[22]

It is, further, very interesting to see how Kuntaka justifies the fact of his having selected Kālidāsa, of all the Sanskrit poets, to point out *doṣas*. He says that the works of Kālidāsa, abounding as they are in high excellences of every kind, admit of a glaring vision of the defects if any. Whereas the other poets have composed poems only by dint of effort and no purpose will be served by wasting time in pointing out flaws in those compositions since there is no background of excellence in them against which faults appear striking.[23]

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[21] *Cf.* इत्यविनयानुष्ठाननिष्ठं त्रिविष्टपाधिपत्यप्रतिष्ठितस्यापि तथाविधाभिप्रायानुवर्तनपरत्वेनाभिधीयमानमनौचित्यमावहति ।—*Ibid.*

[22] प्रबन्धस्यापि क्वचित्प्रकरणैकदेशेऽप्यौचित्यविरहादेकदेशदाहदूषितदग्धपटप्रायता प्रसज्यते ।—*Ibid.*

[23] एतच्चैतस्यैव कवेः सहजसौकुमार्यमुद्रितसूक्तिपरिस्पन्दसौन्दर्यस्य पर्यालोच्यते, न पुनरन्येषामाहार्यमात्रकाव्यकरणकौशलश्लाघिनाम्. . .—*Ibid.*

Mahimabhaṭṭa

The next writer on Sanskrit Poetics who deserves our attention is Mahimabhaṭṭa who wrote his work viz., the *Vyaktiviveka* for demolishing the theory of *dhvani* promulgated by the *Dhvanyāloka*. One of the severest critics of Ānandavardhana as he was, still Mahimabhaṭṭa does not dispute the fact that the soul of poetry is *rasa*.[24] He only calls into question Ānandavardhana's doctrine of *dhvani*. He also admits unhesitatingly Ānandavardhana's doctrine of *anaucitya* (incongruity) but proceeds to analyse the concept scientifically.

It is very surprising indeed to find Mahimabhaṭṭa, a polemical writer himself, saying at the outset that good manners forbid a lengthy discussion of others' faults and the office of the true critic is to understand the merits, if any, in others rather than pick holes in them. This procedure of being alive only to others' defects, will, according to him, fall only to the lot of unfortunate persons. But he justifies his exposition of faults by remarking that he had to transgress the path of the polite in order to satisfy the request of his pupils who sought for enlightenment as also to remove misapprehension in the minds of men who might level against his head the unmerited charges of muddleheadedness, want of etiquette in ignoring their question, and reticence due to jealousy.[25]

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[24] *Cf.* काव्यस्यात्मनि संज्ञिनि रसादिरूपे न कस्यचिद्विमतिः ।
—*Vyaktiviveka*, I. 26

[25] *Cf.* तानिदानीमखिलान्दोषान् खला इव व्याख्यास्यामः—
मुग्धः किं किमसभ्य एष भजते मात्सर्यमौनं नु किं
पृष्टो न प्रतिवक्ति यः किल जनस्तत्रेति सम्भावयेत् ।
छात्राभ्यर्थनया ततोऽद्य सहसैवोत्सृज्य मार्गं सतां
पौरोभाग्यमभाग्यभाजनजनासेव्यं मयाङ्गीकृतम् ॥—*Ibid.* II. 1.

Mahimabhaṭṭa does not himself claim to be perfect and free from every fault. He says that nothing prevents a doctor who himself is addicted to unwholesome diet from prohibiting others from indulging in it.[26]

The whole of the second chapter of Mahimabhaṭṭa's book is devoted to an exposition of the types of *anaucitya* amidst several digressions. According to him, it is of two kinds—अर्थविषय and शब्दविषय. From another point of view the division is into अन्तरङ्ग and बहिरङ्ग. The अन्तरङ्ग अनौचित्य consists in the improper employment of विभाव, अनुभाव and व्यभिचारिभाव in the manifestation of *rasa* and since it has been ably explained by the Dhvanikāra, he does not enter into any discussion of it. The बहिरङ्ग अनौचित्य (external impropriety) falls under five heads—विधेयाविमर्श, प्रक्रमभेद, क्रमभेद, पौनरुक्त्य and वाच्यावचन.

As far as we know this classification of *doṣas* was for the first time enunciated by Mahimabhaṭṭa. They are as much logical as literary defects. The commentator Maṅkhuka (Ruyyaka?) tries hard to justify this classification on the authority of Pāṇini, Patañjali and Kātyāyana. This makes very interesting reading.[27]

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[26] *Cf.* स्वकृतिष्वयन्त्रितः कथमनुशिष्यादन्यमयमिति न वाच्यम् ।
वारयति भिषगपथ्यादितरान् स्वयमाचरन्नपि तत् ॥—*op. cit.*

[27] Read—यदेतदिह ग्रन्थकृता विचारसरणिमाश्रित्य विधेयाविमर्शादिदोषपञ्चकमुद्भावितं न तत्राद्यतनपुरुषमात्रबुद्धिप्रणयनासूययानादरः करणीयः । पूर्वैरेवंविधदोषोद्भावनरूपस्य विचारस्य प्रणीतत्वात् । तथाहि—'दास्याः पुत्र' इत्यादावाक्रोशे षष्ठ्या अलुकं प्रतिपादयता सूत्रकृता विधेयाविमर्शः सूचित एव । तथा 'स्वामीश्वराधिपतिदायादा'इत्यत्र सूत्रे "न हि भवति गवां स्वामी अश्वेषु च"इति वदता भाष्यकृता स्पष्टमेव प्रक्रमभेदः प्रतिपादितः । तथा

— *Continued Next Page.*

Bhoja

The next work सरस्वतीकण्ठाभरण of Bhoja is a voluminous work which deals in the very first chapter with 16 *doṣas* of *pada,* 16 of *vākya,* and 16 of *vākyārtha.* Thus though the number of *doṣas* reaches its climax viz., 48 in Bhoja, the fact is worth noting that practically they are all *doṣas* mentioned in some context or other by earlier writers but which are all given an independent status in this work. With characteristic love of detail, Bhoja has treated these defects. But the treatment did not receive any serious attention by later writers. It is just a compendium of minute details and nothing more.

Mammaṭa

The last great work which deserves our notice is the well known *Kāvyaprakāśa* of Mammaṭa. Here has been set the standard for *doṣas* as for many other concepts once and for all time to come. It is significant to note that he includes in his catalogue of *doṣas,* those mentioned for the

— *Continued from Page 164.*

'कृञ्चानुप्रज्यते लिटि' इत्यत्रानुप्रयोगस्यानुशब्दपर्यालोचनया व्यवहित-पूर्वप्रयोगं 'तं पातयां प्रथममास' इत्यादौ निषेधता चादीनां च नहि भवति 'च वृक्षः' इत्यादिना प्रयोगनियमख्यापनेन द्योतकत्वं कथयता अस्थानप्रयोगलक्षणः क्रमभेदः कटाक्षित एव । तथा कर्मधारय-मत्वर्थीयाभ्यां बहुव्रीहिर्लघुत्वात् स्यादिति वृत्तिलाघवं चिन्तयता कात्यायनेन पौनरुक्त्यमपि प्रकाशितमेव । तथा ईषदसमाप्तौ इत्यत्र प्रतिज्ञानसमधिगम्यं सूत्रकारोक्तं रूपकलक्षणमर्थं दूषयता प्रकृत्यर्थ-सदृशे कल्पबादिविधानमिति प्रतिज्ञानसमधिगम्यार्थभूतामुपमां व्यवस्था-पयतोपमाश्रयेण वाच्यावचनमपि द्योतितमेव । एतेन रूपकाश्रयेणा-वाच्यवचनमपि द्योतितमेव । तदेवं महाविदुषां मार्गमनुसृत्य सहृदय-शिक्षादराय विचारयतोऽस्य महामतेर्नं कश्चित् पर्यनुयोगलेशस्याप्यवसर इत्यलमतिप्रसङ्गेन ।—*Vyaktiviveka,* Benares edn. pp. 151-2.

first time by Mahimabhaṭṭa. He enumerates 13 *pada-doṣas*, 11 *vākya-doṣas*, 10 *artha-doṣas* and 14 *rasa-doṣas*. Almost all the later writers slavishly follow Mammaṭa in their treatment. The concept of *nitya* and *anitya-doṣas* found in Ānandavardhana was also fully developed by Mammaṭa. The marring or otherwise of the poetic effect by the *doṣas* is judged by him not on their own account, but in terms of the part they play in the manifestation of *rasa*. It is for this reason that the division of the *doṣas* into *nitya* and *anitya* varieties arises, and some of the *doṣas* cease to be so when they are considered to be in consonance with the delineation of particular *raṣas*.

Mammaṭa was also responsible for the detailed distinction of *rasa-doṣas*. The Dhvanikāra dealt with only the broad aspect of the subject and designated all *rasa-doṣas* under the general name of *anaucitya*. It was Mammaṭa who for the first time pointed out the various kinds of *anaucitya* as relating to *rasa*.

XIII

THE SANSKRIT CONCEPTION OF A POET

कवीनां मानसं नौमि तरन्ति प्रतिभाम्भसि ।
यत्र हंसवयांसीव भुवनानि चतुर्दश ।।

The history of Sanskrit poetics has been a long and chequered one. Tradition ascribes its origin to hoary and prehistoric times. But leaving alone the question of age, the incontestable fact remains that, from the earliest beginnings, Sanskrit criticism has kept in view the education and equipment of the poet side by side with the initiation of the critic into the principles of literary judgment. In the course of centuries of development in this branch of study, the former theme, however, received particular attention at the hands of a group of writers who made it their business to instruct the poet in his profession. Notwithstanding this independent school of writers on kavi-śikṣā (belonging to comparatively later times) even the earlier writers on Sanskrit poetics like Bhāmaha have their own speculations to offer on this question of the making of a true poet.

The social position of the poet in ancient India was a very honoured one. The poet enjoyed a highly privileged and enviable status in the assemblies and concourses of the cultured classes in those days. The gift of composing poetry was considered to be the acid test of polish in speech and manners. Right at the beginning of his work Bhāmaha asks–'How can one have any pretensions to elegance in speech in the absence of good poetry?'[1] It is

[1] रहिता सत्कवित्वेन कीदृशी वाग्विदग्धता । —*loc. cit.*

clear that composing poetry must have been one of the most cherished ideals of men of taste in ancient India. Bhāmaha and a host of other writers who have written treatises on Sanskrit poetics thought it worth their while to guide the prospective poets in the right direction as far and as well as they could.

"*Poeta nascitur non fit*"—'A man is born a poet, not made one'—such goes the well-known Latin saying. This, if accepted in full, would render all further discussion on the topic in question (*viz.*, 'the making of the poet') absurd as well as futile. However, the saying should be understood to mean only that innate genius is a more essential requirement of the poet than any other proficiency of an acquired kind. It no doubt assigns the first and foremost place to inborn genius and power; but in so doing it does not exclude altogether from its domain the essentiality of cultivated talent. The difference between the two exists only in the degree of their importance and not in the extent of their indispensability. Innate poetic genius, when shorn of all connection with good training and general environment, is sure to die in its infancy without producing anything of value. There is, of course, no denying the truth that mere training or drill, however intensive it may be, will be absolutely fruitless if the person who is subjected to it is innocent of all poetic feeling and imagination. All the same, it is as much the duty of the budding poet who is gifted with genius to exploit it to his best advantage by undergoing the right kind of discipline. Unbridled imagination may run riot and render the whole work ineffectual. But when drilled by discipline it is sure to produce remarkable results. It was this discipline that the Sanskrit theories set about regulating. Talent is that

which is in a man's power; genius is that in whose power man is. Doing easily what others find difficult is talent; doing what is impossible for talent is genius.

Bhāmaha, the earliest Sanskrit rhetorician proper, lays down at the outset that *pratibhā* (or poetic imagination) is the *sine qua non* for the poet. 'Even the untalented ones are able to study the śāstra with the aid of the instruction of the teacher, but not so with regard to poetry. A kāvya worth its name can be composed only by a man who possesses *pratibhā*.[2] But that is not all. An aspirant to poetic fame must set to work only after having equipped himself with all the knowledge that a poet is required to have. A list of such studies as are essential to a poet, is prepared by Bhāmaha as follows:—grammar, metre, lexicography, epic stories, worldly affairs, logic and fine arts.[3] Though Bhāmaha has not specifically used the words *vyutpatti* (culture) and *abhyāsa* (practice or application) in this context, a perusal of the following passage:

'śabdābhidheye vijñāya kṛtvā tadvidupāsanāṁ |
vilokyānyanibandhāṁśca kāryaḥ kāvyakriyādaraḥ || '

['After acquainting oneself with (the principles of) word and sense, after having devoted oneself to the teaching of the masters well versed in them, and finally, after having studied the composition of other poets, one should endeavour to compose a kāvya]—will show that he recognised in full the significance of those words which became the stock-in-trade of later theorists.

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[2] काव्यं तु जायते जातु कस्यचित्प्रतिभावतः । —Kāvyālaṅkāra, 1. 5.

[3] शब्दश्छन्दोऽभिधानार्थां इतिहासाश्रयाः कथाः ।
लोको युक्तिः कलाश्चेति मन्तव्याः काव्ययोनयः ॥ —*ibid.*, 1. 9.

Bhāmaha does not give us any elaborate analysis or treatment of the concept of *pratibhā*, and it is but natural in view of his antiquity. But the very fact that he recognises *pratibhā* on the part of the poet as the indispensable condition of good poetry is enough to secure him a high place among those who sought to discover the secret of good poetry. But we should not forget that though Bhāmaha believed in *pratibhā*, he also believed, as Dr. De observes, "in making a poet into a poet."

Daṇḍin too, harps upon the same tune.[4] But he is more explicit than Bhāmaha in admitting that even in the absence of natural genius, one may turn out to be a poet by dint of sheer study and assiduous practice. While Bhāmaha seems to insist on *pratibhā* as the primary requirement in a poet, Daṇḍin appears to differ from Bhāmaha in this respect. As stated by him, 'Though there be lack of that wondrous genius, the product of preceding births, yet the goddess of speech, when worshipped by learning and application, is sure to grant the boon of poetry.[5] And consequently, Daṇḍin exhorts all poetic aspirants to ply their studies diligently and pursue their practice patiently. He says—"So away with sloth, let Sarasvatī be ceaselessly worshipped by those who would win fame. Men who have earned the capacity of composing poetry with sustained effort, though their poetic endowment be slender, are sure

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[4] *Cf.* नैसर्गिकी च प्रतिभा श्रुतं च बहुनिर्मलम् ।
अमन्दश्चाभियोगोऽस्याः कारणं काव्यसम्पदः ॥

—Kāvyādarśa.

[5] न विद्यते यद्यपि पूर्ववासनागुणानुबन्धिप्रतिभानमद्भुतम् ।
श्रुतेन यत्नेन च वागुपासिता ध्रुवं करोत्येव कमप्यनुग्रहम् ।

—*ibid.*, 1. 104.

to shine in the assemblies of the learned.[6] In other words, genius may live and thrive without training, but it does not the less reward the watering-pot and pruning knife. Labour and intent study joined with the strong propensity of nature would, no doubt, produce the best results.

The matter is treated much more exhaustively by Vāmana. His views are not without originality. General reflections about the 'kavi' open the second *adhyāya* of the first *adhikaraṇa* in his *kāvyālaṅkārasūtravṛtti*. Vāmana knows two sorts of poets—captious and non-discriminating (Arocakins and Satṛṇābhyavahārins).[7] As explained in the *Vṛtti,* these terms have been used in a metaphorical sense. The first group of poets is very difficult to please in all that appertains to poetics. In composing a kāvya they proceed with the greatest diligence. They discriminate accurately between what is fit and what is not fit. The second group, on the other hand, does not differentiate good from bad. In other words—the one is by nature *vivekin* (discriminating) and the other *avivekin* or non-discriminating. Only poets of the former class are worth being instructed on account of their being endowed with the ability of discrimination[8], while those of the latter should not be instructed, because they cannot discriminate.[9] The

[6] तदस्ततन्द्रैरनिशं सरस्वती
श्रमादुपास्या खलु कीर्तिमीप्सुभिः ।
कृशे कवित्वेऽपि जनाः कृतश्रमाः
विदग्धगोष्ठीषु विहर्तुमीशते ॥ —*ibid.*, 1. 105.

[7] *Cf.* अरोचकिनः सतृणाभ्यवहारिणश्चेति कवयः । —*op. cit.*

[8] *Cf.* पूर्वे शिष्याः विवेकित्वात् । —*op. cit.*

[9] *Cf.* नेतरे तद्विपर्ययात् । —*op. cit.*

science of poetics is not meant for people of this latter class. It will serve no purpose for them.[10] Indeed the *kataka* nut cannot clarify mire though it is used to clarify muddy water.[11]

Next Vāmana goes on to give a long list of the several branches of study that are essential for the proper equipment of the *arocaki-kavis* in the third chapter of his book. They are designated by him as *kāvyāṅgas* or 'ancillaries of poetry'. In this connection one is reminded of Bharata's remark that the world of poetry is concurrent with the whole world of science and art, logic and rhetoric. The sphere of poetry is indeed all-pervasive and all-embracing.[12] Everything is grist for the poet's mill. The entire human experience, observation of nature, scraps of scientific lore, impressions from other, often hostile, phases of activity – he absorbs all as the bee assimilates nectar; and he gives it back sometime, somewhere, metamorphosed, according to the gift that is in him, the true honey of the mind.

Vāmana, in the first instance, broadly divides *kāvyāṅga* into three sections—*loka* (the world), *vidyā* (the sciences) and prakīrṇaṁ (miscellaneous). Subsequently he devotes much space for an examination of further classifications of these. We need not enter into these details. It is, however, interesting to note that Vāmana brings *pratibhā* (which he calls *pratibhāna*) under the last head of *prakīrṇa* in the association of such other requisites as *lakṣyajñatva*, *abhiyoga*

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[10] *Cf.* न शास्त्रमद्रव्येष्वर्थवत् । —*op. cit.*

[11] *Cf.* न कतकं पङ्कप्रसादनाय प्रभवति । —*op. cit.*

[12] *Cf.* न स शब्दो न तद्वाच्यं न स न्यायो न सा कला ।
जायते यन्न काव्याङ्गमहो भारो महान्कवेः ॥

and *vṛddhasevā*.[13] The mention of *pratibhā* in the same breath as that of perception of aim, application, attendance upon elders, etc. leads us at first sight to imagine that like Daṇḍin, Vāmana too is assigning a secondary place to creative genius. But strangely enough, the *sūtra* which amplifies the nature of *pratibhā* runs thus—"Kavitva-bījaṁ pratibhānaṁ" ('In genius lies the very seed of poetry.') This, of course, is more in consonance with the position of Bhāmaha than that of Daṇḍin. What is more, Vāmana has gone a step further than Bhāmaha in attempting to determine the nature of *pratibhā*. The *vṛtti* on the above quoted sūtra makes it clear that *pratibhā* is an inborn talent, a mental impression, the cause of which is to be sought in previous births. It is this that verily forms the germ out of which poetry sprouts forth and without which no literary composition is possible. If, nevertheless, a man endeavours to produce poetry even in the absence of *pratibhā*, the effect will be nothing but ridiculous.[14] Vāmana here seems to have hit at the truth about poetry for the first time in the history of Sanskrit poetics. His description of *pratibhā* came to be accepted *verbatim* in later times at the hands of such standard writers as Mammaṭa and Hema-candra.[15] A poem without poetic flash contains no life;

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[13] लक्ष्यज्ञत्वमभियोगो वृद्धसेवावेक्षणं प्रतिभानमवधानं
च प्रकीर्णम्—*ibid.*, I. iii. 11.

[14] कवित्वस्य बीजं कवित्वबीजं जन्मान्तरागतसंस्कारविशेषः कश्चित् ।
यं बीजं विना काव्यं न निष्पद्यते । निष्पन्नं वावहासायतनं स्यात् ।—*loc, cit.*

[15] *Cf.* शक्तिः कवित्वबीजरूपः संस्कारविशेषः कश्चित् यां विना काव्यं न प्रसरेत् प्रसृतं वा उपहसनीयं स्यात्
—Vṛtti on *Kāvyāprakāśa*, 1. 3.

it is a flower without fragrance. The credit for having first sounded the warning *'fee nihil invita dices faciesve Minerva'*, (Beware of attempting anything in literary composition for which nature has not gifted you, *i. e.*, against the grain) in Sanskrit poetics goes to Vāmana.

Attention may also be drawn to the fact that Vāmana's teaching does not merely end in the enumeration of the various branches of learning necessary for the poet, but it also takes into account practical details of instruction such as the time and place suitable for the production of poetry. Vāmana says that the poet must bring to bear upon his composition a perfect concentration of mind. It is only then that he will be in a position to see through "the life of things". To achieve such a state of mind, the poet must first gain access to an atmosphere congenial to his aim. The suitable atmosphere can be procured only at certain times of the day in specific places. The place must be secluded and the time preferably the fourth watch of the night.[16] This gives us an insight into the practice of Sanskrit poets in ancient India. Their attitude towards poetry was that of a worshipper towards his deity. The act of composing poetry was more or less sacred in itself and had to be performed with a pure and concentrated mind only at appointed hours. Thus approached, the goddess of poetry would crown the aspiring poet with success and not otherwise. Sanskrit poets like Kālidāsa and Māgha too have corroborated this view. Kālidāsa says in *Raghuvaṁśa* (XVIII)—

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[16] चित्तैकाग्र्यमवधानम् । तद्देशकालाभ्याम् । विविक्तो देशः ।
रात्रियामस्तुरीयः कालः ।
—*Kāvyālaṅkārasūtravṛtti*, I. iii. 17-20.

'Paścimādyāminīyāmād prasādamiva cetanā'

indicating that the mind becomes tranquil only towards the last watch of the night. Māgha is more explicit when he says that poets begin to visualise the entire world of poesy after their mind has achieved tranquillity as a result of deep sleep during night.[17] Thus, the cool hours of the early morning seem to have been the time when the poets composed their immortal poems. Vāmana is the first writer who gives us these interesting details.

Rudraṭa, the next writer of note on Sanskrit poetics, also accepts in the main the threefold requirement of the poet laid down by earlier writers. His originality consists in the fact that he gives each of them a convenient name which came to be standardised later.

He says: 'tasya (kāvyasya) karaṇe/tritayaṁ vyāpriyate śaktirvyutpattirabhyāsah'—(I. 14). *śakti* and *pratibhā* are synonyms. Words and meanings flash on the mind of the poet as a result of genius. *Vyutpatti* or learning assists him in adopting the essential and avoiding the non-essential. Practice will lend excellence to genius.[18]
Śakti is defined by Rudraṭa as follows—

> "The springing forth in many ways of the ideas to be expressed and lucid diction in a well-concentrated mind is indeed *śakti.*"

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[17] *Cf.* गहनमपररात्रप्राप्तबुद्धिप्रसादाः कवय इव महीपाश्चिन्तयन्त्यर्थजातम् ॥
—*loc. cit.*

[18] *Cf.* तत्र शक्त्या शब्दार्थौ मनसि संनिधीयेते । तयोः सारासारग्रहणनिरासौ व्युत्पत्त्या क्रियेते । अभ्यासेन शक्तेरुत्कर्ष आधीयते इति शक्त्यादिव्यापारः ।
—Commentary on Rudraṭa's *Kāvyālaṅkāra*, N. S. Edn.

This *śakti*, also called by the name of *pratibhā* by others, is two-fold according to Rudraṭa—innate and acquired. Of these two, the innate is the better one on account of its spontaneity. It needs but a little practice to give rise to poetry; whereas the second kind has got to be first produced by virtue of *vyutpatti* and then adapted to practice before it can help poetry. Thus, since it entails much endeavour, this latter kind of *pratibhā* is inferior to that of the first. In other words, we may say that there are two classes of poets—the poets by education and practice, these we respect; and poets by nature, these we love. To borrow the words of E. R. B. Lytton.

> "Talk not of genius baffled, genius is master of man,
> Genius does what it must, and talent does what we can."

Rudraṭa we have seen, has merely repeated in other words the ideas of his predecessors about the triple requisites of a poet. But as regards the distinction of *pratibhā* into two varieties, *sahajā* and *utpādyā*, he is completely original. Daṇḍin held that all *pratibhā* is of one kind only and that it is *naisargikī*, which means nothing but *sahajā*. Rudraṭa holds that in addition to this innate genius, there is another kind of genius which is produced by virtue of learning. Whereas in the opinion of Daṇḍin, all genius can be only innate and can never be produced by extraneous factors, Rudraṭa asserts that genius can be produced in the poet by strenuous endeavour on his part. However, Rudraṭa too admits that there is a difference in degree though not in kind between the two varieties of

pratibhā.[19]

So much for the earlier writers. In their disquisitions, sometimes pedantic, the truth is brought home to the reader that

"'Tis long disputed, whether poets claim
From *art* or *nature* their best right to fame.
But *art*, if not enriched by nature's vein,
And a rude *genius* of uncultured strain,
Are useless both; but when in friendship joined,
A mutual succour in each other find." (Horace).

Genius may shine without the help of art; cultivated by art, it will produce more agreeable fruit. At the same time it must also be borne in mind that study, precept and observation will nought avail without the assistance of nature. Yet even though nature has done her part, by implanting the seeds of taste, great pains must be taken, and great skill exerted, in raising them to proper pitch of vegetation. 'The judicious tutor must gradually and tenderly unfold the mental faculties of the youth committed to his charge. He must cherish his delicate perception; store his mind with proper ideas; point out the different channels of observation; teach him to compare objects; to establish the limits of right and wrong, of truth and falsehood; to distinguish beauty from tinsel, and grace from affectation; in a word, to strengthen and improve by culture, experience and instruction those natural powers of

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[19] *Cf.* मनसि सदा सुसमाधिनि विस्फुरणमनेकधाभिधेयस्य ।
अक्लिष्टानि पदानि विभान्ति यस्यामसौ शक्तिः ॥
प्रतिभेत्यपरैरुदिता सहजोत्पाद्या च सा द्विधा भवति ।
पुंसा सह जातत्वादनयोस्तु ज्यायसी सहजा ॥
स्वस्यासौ संस्कारे परमपरं मृगयते यतो हेतुम् ।
उत्पाद्या तु कथञ्चिद् व्युत्पत्त्या जन्यते परया ॥ —*loc. cit.*

feeling and sagacity which constitute the faculty called taste, and enable the professor to enjoy the delights of the *Belles Lettres*'. Such elaborate instruction in the art of taste and poesy indeed assumes that Nature has not been equally favourable to all men in conferring upon them a grain of genius which may be improved without much ado.

At first sight one might be tempted to wonder if all these theories have not missed in their discussion, something fundamental about the subject they are concerned with. One would like to know more about the mainsprings of true poetry and the characteristics of a good poet rather than threadbare discussions about meticulous details of his education. The science of poetics can never attain completeness in itself without an attempt at answering this most important problem of the nature of genius and the various ways in which it finds expression. Poetry is not merely an intellectual pursuit. Its value lies more in the aesthetic pleasure it brings in the mind of the reader. This naturally implies that the poet's genius is concerned with the emotional and imaginative aspects of things. Poetry is the vehicle in which genius expresses its most sublime conceptions.

This problem of the sources of poetry received adequate consideration at the hands of later theorists such as Ānandavardhana, Abhinavagupta, Mahimabhaṭṭa and Kuntaka. The primary object of these writers was, it should be remembered, the promulgation of an acceptable theory of poetry in all its aspects. Hence we need not wonder if the topic of the working of genius in a poet comes to be treated of only incidentally. But all the same, their remarks are very valuable inasmuch as they shed a flood of light on the problem in question.

A precise and comprehensive definition of *pratibhā* or poetic imagination was laid down by Bhaṭṭa Tauta, the author of a work on poetics called *Kāvyakautuka* (which is not extant now). This definition was reverentially accepted by Abhinavagupta in his *Dhvanyālokalocana* and his authority influenced all the succeeding writers such as Mammaṭa. The definition itself reads thus—

"Poetic imagination is that gift of mind by whose aid one can visualise myriad things anew.[20] It is by virtue of this gift alone that one deserves the title of 'Poet'." Hence it goes without saying that poetry abounds for the most part in imaginative description. There are some more verses of Bhaṭṭa Tauta which have come down to us as quotations in the works of later writers such as Hemacandra. These indeed go to the very heart of the question of poesy and bear quotation.[21]

> It has been remarked that no non-sage can be deservingly called poet; and a sage will be worth his name only by virtue of his vision. By vision we mean that insight into Truth about all the manifold materials in the world and their various aspects. One can win the distinction of 'poet' in the sciences if he possesses this vision of Truth. But in everyday speech the

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[20] *Cf.* प्रज्ञा नवनवोन्मेषशालिनी प्रतिभा मता ।
तदनुप्राणनाजीवद्वर्णनानिपुणः कविः ॥
तस्य कर्म स्मृतं काव्यम् —*loc. cit.*

[21] नानृषिः कविरित्युक्तं ऋषिश्च किल दर्शनात् ।
विचित्रभावधर्मांशतत्त्वप्रख्या च दर्शनम् ॥
स तत्त्वदर्शनादेव शास्त्रेषु पठितः कविः ।
दर्शनाद्वर्णनाच्चाथ रूढा लोके कविश्रुतिः ॥
तथा हि दर्शने स्वच्छे नित्येऽप्यादिकवेर्मुनेः ।
नोदिता कविता लोके यावज्जाता न वर्णना ॥ —*loc. cit.*

world accords that title to him alone who possesses both vision and imaginative description. Thus though Vālmīki was highly gifted with enduring and clear vision, he was not hailed as a poet by people until he embodied it in a descriptive work."

Here Bhaṭṭa Tauta has very ingeniously correlated the ancient sayings "Nānṛṣiḥ kurute kāvyaṁ" and "Ṛṣayaḥ krāntadarśinaḥ" with his conception of the poet. A poet is first and foremost a *seer*. His alert genius penetrates all directions and he sees through the nature of every object. But mere vision is not enough. It must be co-ordinated by the creative faculty which enables the poet to translate into words the numberless things that his imagination pictures before his mind. Highest poetry, which is the product of such genius, "lifts the veil from the hidden beauty of the world and makes familiar objects be as if they were not familiar" (Shelley). Genius is

. . . the mirror
In whom as in the splendour of the sun,
All shapes look glorious . . . (Shelley).

The rare lovely essence in which we delight, the fragrant, delicate breath of noble magnificent sublimity, must be something which rises above 'pretty little tricks of style'. Poetry is not a mere mechanical art but something over and above it. It is the outcome of real genius, and, as the result of it, one can see—

"All the charm of all the Muses
Flowering in a lonely word."

S. T. Coleridge, one of the greatest English critics, describes it in these words—"Good sense is the body of poetic genius, fancy its drapery, motion its life, and imagination the soul."[22]

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22 *Biographia Literaria*, Ch. I.

There is no work of such a genius which has not been the delight of mankind; no word of genius to which the human heart and soul have not sooner or later responded. It was this confidence in the abiding worth of genius that led Bhavabhūti to make the daring remark—

> Whoever there be that thinks of slighting me, (it is not my concern here to call their competency into question) let them remain snug in their pride. My composition is not calculated to cater to their tastes. Some one may be born, or might have already been born, who is akin to me in temperament. It is indeed for such a person that I address my work. Time, forsooth, is endless and extensive is the earth!"[23]

The correlation between the 'poet' and the 'seer' that Bhaṭṭa Tauta has instituted appears to be doubly significant. We have seen above at some length how genius demarcates the poet from the scientist. On the other hand, we are also reminded of the early compositions of the ancient Aryans when we come across the word *ṛsi* or seer. The origin of Vedic literature is no doubt shrouded in mystery. There is also no gainsaying the fact that many works belonging to that hoary antiquity are more voluminous though by no means luminous. Granting all this, it will have to be admitted that early Vedic poetry as preserved to us in the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā, sprang from inspiration and enthusiasm. The Vedic bards must have been struck with sublime conceptions, with admiration and awe, by those great phenomena which, though repeated daily, can never be

[23] ये नाम केचिदिह नः प्रथयन्त्यवज्ञां
जानन्तु ते किमपि तान्प्रति नैष यत्नः ।
उत्पत्स्यतेऽस्ति मम कोऽपि समानधर्मा
कालो ह्ययं निरवधिर्विपुला च पृथ्वी ॥

—Prologue to *Mālatīmādhava*.

viewed without intense emotion. These would break forth in exclamations expressive of the feeling produced, whether surprise or gratitude, terror or exultation. The rising, the apparent course, the setting and seeming renovation of the sun; the revolution of light and darkness; the splendour, change, and circuit of the moon, and the canopy of heaven bespangled with stars, must have produced expressions of wonder and adoration. In other words, the muse would be consecrated to the purposes of adoration.[24] Thus the most famous stanza of the Ṛgveda which has been a daily prayer in India for more than three thousand years is—

'May we attain that excellent
Glory of Savitṛ the God,
That he may stimulate our thoughts.'[25]

Thus, with a little stretch of imagination, we may picture to our minds the significance attaching to the word *ṛṣi* and in its train the word *kavi*.

So much for Bhaṭṭa Tauta's contribution to the subject of *pratibhā*. We have to regret that his *Kāvyakautuka* has not come down to us. As indicated earlier, his pupil Abhinavagupta, who too was an authority on Sanskrit poetics, accepts this view of his *guru* as final. His originality consists in the fact that he introduces the idea of aesthetic emotion in explaining Bhaṭṭa Tauta's position. According to Abhinavagupta, "The gift of finding out newer and newer ideas and things is itself *pratibhā*. But

[24] For a fuller account of this topic *vide* my article on the 'Religion of the Veda', *Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society,* Vol. XXXIV, No. 1.

[25] *Ṛgveda,* iii, 62, 10.

what makes for poetry is an aspect of *pratibhā* that is conducive to the composition of poetry suffused with thrilling emotion and aesthetic beauty."[26] An attempt to distinguish between the terms *pratibhā*, *prajñā*, *buddhi*, *mati* and *smṛti* is made in an oft-quoted verse—"Mind, when it becomes capable of understanding all facts without any temporal limit, comes to be called by the name of *prajñā*; and this itself acquires the name of *pratibhā* with an additional qualification, namely invention of newer and newer images.[27] It is such *pratibhā* that is directed to the production of aesthetic pleasure through the medium of poetry.

Ānandavardhana devotes an entire chapter (*viz.*, IV) in his *Dhvanyāloka* for the consideration of *pratibhā* or imagination. Even earlier, he has eloquently praised the poet's creative power. He says—"In the vast domain of poetry, the poet alone is the sole creator. According to his whims and fancies the whole world of ours undergoes transfiguration . . . If the poet be inspired by love, lo! the whole world becomes transfused with emotion; but if he be devoid of all sentiment, everything becomes dry and insipid. The creative magic of the poet is unparalleled. He is free to fill inanimate objects with life and take away life even from animate ones according to his sweet

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[26] *Cf.* प्रतिभा अपूर्ववस्तुनिर्माणक्षमा प्रज्ञा । तस्या विशेषः रसावेश-वैशद्यसौन्दर्यकाव्यनिर्माणक्षमत्वम् ।

—*Dhvanyālokalocana.*

[27] स्मृतिर्व्यतीतविषया मतिरागामिगोचरा ।
बुद्धिस्त्रैकालिकी प्रोक्ता प्रज्ञा त्रैकालिकी मता ।।
प्रज्ञां नवनवोन्मेषशालिनीं प्रतिभां विदुः ।।

pleasure"[28] Mammaṭa goes a step further and raises the poet to a height even greater than that of the creator. The poetic world is said to be devoid of the shackles of destiny, to be of the nature of ecstasy, and depending on nothing extrinsic to itself and delightful by reason of the nine sentiments which are depicted therein unlike the real world of the creator, which is destitute of all these.[29] Abhinavagupta goes even to greater lengths when he declares that in poetry, there is not the operation of any causal phenomenon. By the poet's deft touch, the hardest stone-like substances in the world are made to lose their hardness and become soft and soothing and full of brimming sentiment. The process of literature, which hinges around the poet as much as the sympathetic critic flashes before us in the order of poetic insight and creative self-expression, and it is beautiful to a degree.[30]

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[28] अपारे काव्यसंसारे कविरेव प्रजापतिः ।
यथास्मै रोचते विश्वं तथेदं परिवर्तते ॥
शृङ्गारी चेत्कविः काव्ये जातं रसमयं जगत् ।
स एव वीतरागश्चेन्नीरसं सर्वमेव तत् ॥
भावानचेतनानपि चेतनवच्चेतनानचेतनवत् ।
व्यवहारयति यथेष्टं काव्ये सुकविः स्वतन्त्रतया ॥
Cf. also-नामरूपात्मकं विश्वं दृश्यते यदिदं द्विधा ।
तत्राद्यस्य कविर्वेधा द्वितीयस्य प्रजापतिः ॥
—*Sabhārañjanaśataka*, 26.

[29] *Cf.* नियतिकृतनियमरहितां ह्लादैकमयीमनन्यपरतन्त्राम् ।
नवरसरुचिरां निर्मितिमादधती भारती कवेर्जयति ॥
—*Kāvyāprakāśa*, I, i, 1.

[30] अपूर्वं यद्वस्तु प्रथयति विना कारणकलां
जगद्ग्रावप्रख्यं निजरसभरात्सारयति च ।
क्रमात्प्रख्योपाख्याप्रसरसुभगं भासयति त-
त्सरस्वत्यास्तत्त्वं कविसहृदयाख्यं विजयते ॥ —*Dhvanyālokalocana*.

It is such *pratibhā* or creative imagination that receives special treatment in the fourth *uddyota* (lit. flash) of the *Dhvanyāloka.* The several varieties of *dhvani* or suggestion which have been described at length in the foregoing chapters are rendered effective only by reason of the poet's imagination. If monotony is to be avoided and variety to be achieved, the poet must have recourse to his imagination.[31] Even old themes come to acquire new beauty when they come out of the crucible of the poet's *pratibhā*. It is like the fire which gives new shining to the faded colour of pure gold. The phenomenon can also be compared to that of the trees which put on new glory with the advent of spring.[32] This fact is profusely illustrated by Ānandavardhana with the help of old stanzas dealing with one idea and new stanzas dealing with the same idea, yet appearing more beautiful as a result of the poet's imaginative touch. It is this which accounts for the fact that a single theme will never become threadbare or worn out even when it is worked upon by hundreds of poets provided they are endowed with genius.[33] The same idea is made dearer in a Prākṛt stanza quoted in this context[34] by Ānandavardhana from his own composition *Viṣamabāṇalīlā,* which, unfortunately, has not come down

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[31] ध्वनेर्यः सगुणीभूतव्यङ्ग्यस्याध्वा प्रकाशितः ।
अनेनानन्त्यमायाति कवीनां प्रतिभागुणः ।।

—*Dhvanyāloka*, IV, 1.

[32] दृष्टपूर्वा अपि ह्यर्थाः काव्ये रसपरिग्रहात् ।
सर्वे नवा इवाभान्ति मधुमास इव द्रुमाः ।। —*ibid.*, IV, 4.

[33] न काव्यार्थविरामोऽस्ति यदि स्यात्प्रतिभागुणः । —*ibid.*, IV, 6.

[34] ण अ ताण घडइ ओही ण अ ते दीसन्ति कह वि पुनरुत्ता ।
जे विब्भमा पिआणं अत्थावा सुकविवाणीणम् ।। —*loc. cit.*

to us. It says—"No bounds can be fixed for them; never are they seen to be repeated—the graces of lovely women and the meanings of great poetic expressions." Great poetry in the last resort eludes logical analysis even as the loving graces of a beloved. It transcends reason and has a world of its own. The final effect, no doubt, may not be amenable to reason. But the first material on which the poets have to work must have firm foundation in the world of reality. As Nīlakaṇṭha Dīkṣita has strikingly put it.—"The poets charm the readers and hold them spell-bound by their skill and dexterity in the handling of the self-same material, which one and all are wont to use in their day-to-day existence. The words employed by poets are none other than the ones current in everyday life. The meanings attaching to them also are the same as in ordinary parlance; only the magic is different.[35]

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[35] यानेव शब्दान्वयमालपामो
यानेव चार्थान्वयमुल्लिखामः ।
तैरेव विन्यासविशेषभव्यैः
संमोहयन्ते कवयो जगन्ति ॥

XIV

OBSERVATIONS OF SANSKRIT LITERARY CRITICS ON POETIC IMAGINATION

In this article we propose to consider in some detail the remarks made by the later writers on the nature and province of *Pratibhā* and to draw the reader's attention to some strikingly similar statements in English literary criticism.

It is not without significance that Ānandavardhana speaks of Pratībhā or Imagination in connection with Dhvani or suggestion, the chief variety of which is Rasa-Dhvani or suggestion of the emotions. In common life and art alike, it is the emotions which set the imagination in motion, and *vice versa,* the language of the imagination which stirs the emotions. The processes which we call imaginative are opposed to the processes of reason, just as the appeal to the emotions is in contrast with the appeal to reason. In particular, the imaginative processes treat facts, the data of experience, in a way totally different from the processes of which the reason avails itself, discarding experiences which the reason values, utilizing experiences which the reason discards, and meaning by Truth "something quite different from the truth of science". The poet may, on the one hand, discard history for that "feigned history" as Bacon called it, depicting "a more ample greatness, a more exact goodness, and a more absolute variety than can be found in the nature of things", or on the other, he may take familiar realities, and seek to show forth different meanings, which he has seen within them by qualities of his own. Either process is included in what we call Imagination. We may quote a parallel passage from

Wordsworth—

"If thou partake the animating faith
That poets, even as prophets, each with each
Connected in a mighty scheme of truth,
Have each his own peculiar faculty,
Heaven's gift, a sense that fits him to perceive
Objects unseen before, thou wilt not blame
The humblest of this band who dares to hope
That unto him hath also been vouchsafed
An insight that in some sort he possesses
A principle whereby a work of his
Proceeding from a source of untaught things,
Creative and enduring, may become
A power like one of Nature's".

(*Prelude,* Book xiii)

This interpretation of poetry as appealing to the emotions by means of the imagination is so fundamental a matter that, for many critics, it is the substance of the definition of poetry even among English writers. Thus Theodore Watts Dunton says "No literary expression can, properly speaking, be called poetry that is not in a certain deep sense emotional".[1] P. B. Shelley says—"poetry in a general sense, may be defined to be the expression of the Imagination" *(A Defence of Poetry).* Ruskin observes—"Poetry is the suggestion, by the Imagination, of noble grounds for the noble emotions. I mean by the noble emotions those four principal sacred passions—Love, Veneration, Admiration and Joy,—and their opposites—Hatred, Indignation (or Scorn), Horror and Grief.[2]

[1] Article on 'Poetry' in the Encyclopaedia Britannica.
[2] Modern Painters, Part IV.

The word Imagination suggests the making of images,—images in the mind's eye which more or less resemble the images which are there when an object is seen; and in the simplest use of the term nothing more is implied. From this standpoint the imagination is a peculiarly vivid form of memory. But this is not all; for the imagination is more than memory. It not only recalls past sensations, but adds to them and subtracts from them, making, from the materials thus furnished, new images which have no precise counterpart in nature. The poetic imagination is creative. It not only reproduces the remembered images of the senses, but compares them by a new method suggested by the emotions, combines them into new vivid wholes and leaps to conclusions which remind us of the laborious conclusions of the reason, yet are quite different both in method and results. It is this faculty that makes the great poets akin to the prophets and teachers of the race: for they not only recover for us our forever fleeting pleasures of the senses, but interpret those in a way that reveals the hidden significance of life.

A question arises whether there is one class of themes with which poetry characteristically deals, and other classes which are excluded from its territory. At first thought one is likely to try to define some limitations of this sort because of a general impression that poetry treats as a rule only of lofty or dignified themes, more particularly such as love, beauty and faith, and avoids the low and the commonplace. Yet further reflection will perhaps suggest that what we have in mind is not so much the subject-matter of the poet, as it is what he makes of that subject-matter; and the weight of the testimony of the critics is against limiting him at all in the choice of material. Thus Leigh

Hunt says of poety, after defining it as "the utterance of a passion for truth, beauty and power", that "its means are whatever the universe contains". And Emerson says of the poet: "There is no subject that does not belong to him,—politics, economy, manufactures, and stock brokerage, as much as sunsets and souls; only these things, placed in their true order, are poetry; displaced or put in kitchen order, they are unpoetic."[1] Shakespeare in his characteristic way exclaims—

"Our poesy is a gum which oozes
From whence 'tis nourished....our gentle flame
Provokes itself, and like the current, flies
Each bound it chafes."

That is why the great German poet Goethe declared:

"Frei will ich sein im Denken und im Dichten
Im Handeln schrankt die Welt genung."[2]

The creative magic of the Imagination is well brought out in the following lines of Sir John Davies as quoted by S.T. Coleridge.[3]

"Doubtless this could not be, but that she turns
Bodies to spirit by sublimation strange,
As fire converts to fire the things it burns,
As we our food into our nature change.
From their gross matter she abstracts their forms,
And draws a kind of quintessence from things;
Which to her proper nature she transforms
To bear them light on her celestial wings.

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1 Poetry and the Imagination.

2 "Free will I be in thought and my poetry:
In conduct the world trammels us enough."

3 Biographia Literaria, Ch. XIV.

Thus does she, when from individual states
She doth abstract the universal kinds;
Which then reclothed in divers names and fates
Steal access through our senses to our minds."

or as another poet would have it, the poet's spirit

"Shoots its being through earth, sea and air."

These considerations about poetic Imagination are reflected in the writings of later writers on Sanskrit Poetics who accept the view of the *Dhvani* theorists as final and authoritative. But among the host of such writers two names stand out with great prominence. We mean Mahimabhaṭṭa, the author of the *Vyaktiviveka* and Kuntaka, the author of the *Vakroktijīvita*. Mahimabhaṭṭa's work occupies a unique place in the history of Sanskrit Poetics. Avowedly it is a polemical work directed to refute the doctrines of the Dhvanikāra. His own thesis is that all the manifold varieties of *Dhvani* and other important elements of poetry can be brought under the more comprehensive province of *Anumāna* or Inference. In a thorough-going fashion he sets about his business and points out no less than ten defects in the very definition laid down by Ānandavardhana, in the first chapter of his book *Vyaktiviveka*. In the second chapter, he proceeds to consider scientifically the nature of Defects in the course of which he quotes hundreds of illustrations from the masterpieces of Sanskrit literature and successfully challenges the idea of Kuntaka, Udbhaṭa, and others.[1] His observations are always strictly logical, thought-provoking and illuminating. Mahimabhaṭṭa's position is that *Alaṅkāras* or figures of speech

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[1] For a detailed consideration of this topic, *vide* my article on "the Doctrine of Doṣas in Sanskrit poetics," *Supra.*

acquire worth in poetry only when they possess a special charm. This naturally raises the problem whether Nature-poetry or *svabhāvokti* can be called a figure of speech at all worth the name. He answers the question in the affirmative and supports his position by advancing the following arguments—"Things in the world of nature have indeed a two-fold aspect—the universal and the special. The former admits of varieties in contradistinction to the latter which is unique in its own way. It is this special aspect which is capable of being perceived by the senses and which also forms the subject of Imaginative poetry. Now what is this Imagination in the poet? It is the intuition which arises, out of the acquaintance for the nonce with the real nature of things, in the mind of the poet in concentration as a result of the contemplation of word and sense in keeping with the sentiment to be depicted. It is indeed extolled as the third eye of the great god Śiva who is known to perceive things, past, present and future, by its aid. So even common-place things, when they come out of the poet's imaginative mind, attain the high status of poetry. So *Svabhāvokti* can rank as a valid figure of speech when the thing described is so picturesquely presented to the mind of the reader that he feels he is actually beholding it in every detail.[1] Mahimabhaṭṭa is also of opinion that

[1] विशिष्टमस्य यद्रूपं तत्प्रत्यक्षस्य गोचरः ।
स एव सत्कविगिरां गोचरः प्रतिभाभुवाम् ॥
रसानुगुणशब्दार्थचिन्तास्तिमितचेतसः ।
क्षणं स्वरूपस्पर्शोत्था प्रज्ञैव प्रतिभा कवेः ॥
सा हि चक्षुर्भगवतस्तृतीयमिति गीयते ।

— *Continued Next Page.*

things in nature do not give the same pleasure to the observer as they do when they are made the subjects of poetry. The reason he gives is that the poet is endowed with a special gift of communion with nature.[1] He also quotes with approval an ancient stanza which emphatically declares that the truth about the art of poetry can never be attained by one who has not pleased the elders by his humble services to them. This could be compared to the lot of a king who could never aspire to heaven unless he performed the *Rājasūya* sacrifice which was ordained for him.[2]

All this reminds us of the commonplace of Greek literary criticism that poetry, in common with all art, is "imitation of nature." That phrase is interpreted by some critics to mean not the outside world of created things, but "the creative force, the productive principle of the universe." In the useful arts men catch whispers of Nature's secrets and turn the knowledge thus gained to good account.

— *Continued from Page 192*

येन साक्षात्करोत्येष भावास्त्रैकाल्यवर्तिनः ॥
अर्थस्वभावस्योक्तिर्या सालङ्कारतया मता ।
यतः साक्षादिवाभान्ति तत्रार्थाः प्रतिभार्पिताः ॥

—Vyaktiviveka, II. 116-120.

[1] प्रत्यक्षोऽपि ह्यर्थः साक्षात्संवेद्यमानः सचेतसां न तथा चमत्कारमातनोति यथा स एव सत्कविना वचनगोचरतां गमितः । तदुक्तम्—

कविशक्त्यर्पिता भावास्तन्मयीभावयुक्तितः ।
तथा स्फुरन्त्यमी काव्यान्न तथाध्यक्षतः किल ॥

—Ibid., Ch. I, p. 73. Benares Edn.

[2] काव्यार्थतत्वावगमो न वृद्धाराधनं विना ।
अनिष्टवान् राजसूयं कः स्वर्ग्यं सुखमश्नुते ॥

—Ibid., p. 157, Benares Edn.

Coming to what the Greeks called the imitative or liberal, and we the fine, arts, we discover underlying them, as understood by Aristotle, the idea that man divines the intention of Nature and gives expression to it. In a statue the artist endeavours not so much to reproduce every detail, as to make his conception in its integrity stand forth and speak. He will concentrate on the significant features as he understands them and his success will depend on the happiness of his choice and the execution of his purpose. The imitation of Nature which art thus achieves is often, we will not say an improving on Nature, but a more lucid and articulate presentment of her design in some given part of it. And in poetry, whose proper matter, in the Greek view, was the character, experiences and actions of men, successful work is a presentation of these in their inwardness and ideal compactness; not a meticulous labour on outsides, but a recreating and an exhibition from within. Like all fine art, poetry is ideal, not when it slights or contradicts reality, but when it gives to reality a clarified and intensified expression.

The higher truth and seriousness in the poet's imitation of Nature implies a peculiar ductility in him to the impress of the life of things and an exceptional capacity for recording it. The poet integrates and transfigures what the world presents in a flux of jostling and changing elements. He captures the permanent substance, sifts the perennial from the moment as it flies. Having the intuitive power to penetrate Nature's purposes and divine her message, he becomes her spokesman. Nature is humanized in poetry: the poet is the mind and tongue she enlists in her service. Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka very well brings out this idea when he says that poets are the beloved calves of the cow called Speech.

The milk which she affectionately gives forth to these is unparalleled even by that supreme bliss which Yogins claim to enjoy. It is laboured on the part of ascetics but spontaneous as far as poets are concerned.[1] Schelling is said to have remarked—"Genius is to aesthetics what the ego is to philosophy, the only supreme and absolute reality." Our ancient theorists went even a step further and they not only compared aesthetic bliss to Yogic bliss but also extolled the former as being more easily attained in preference to the latter. Thus Viśvanātha in his *Sāhityadarpaṇa* points out that *Rasa* which is the essence of poetry is *Brahmāsvāda-sahodara*. In dispelling the darkness of Ignorance, *Śāstras* or technical treatises act only as bitter medicines whereas poetry is like delightful nectar. They please the palate and at the same time cure the diseases also.[2] In the words of Keats—

"A drainless shower
Of light is poesy; 'Tis the supreme power
'Tis might slumbering on its own right arm,
The very arching of her eyelids charm
A thousand willing agents to obey
And still she governs with the mildest sway."

Now we may pass on to Kuntaka who is the reputed author of the *Vakroktijīvita*. We may go so far as to say that his whole work is a continuous discourse having as its sole aim the exemplification of the several ways in which a poet's genius finds expression in literature. In Kuntaka's

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[1] वाग्धेनुर्दुग्ध एकं हि रसं यद्बालतृष्णया ।
तेन नास्य समः स स्याद्योगिभिर्दुह्यते हि यः ॥

[2] कटुकौषधवच्छास्त्रमविद्याव्याधिनाशनम् ।
आह्लाद्यामृतवत्काव्यमविवेकगदापहम् ॥ —Vakroktijīvita, p. 6.

work we come across not only information and argument, masterly comparison and sustained intellectual effort, but more than that—a wealth of imagination and a breadth of outlook, a beautiful exuberance of fancy and language unparalleled in works on Sanskrit Poetics. We are provided with something which by some subtle means brings us closer to the Sanskrit classics than we could hope to get unaided; something that creates in our mind the right receptive mood. It is a unique type of criticism which transports the reader and at the same time informs him. It is artistic and at the same time intellectual. In a word it is creative. Kuntaka so loses himself in the literary piece he studies that his criticism gives us an artistic expression of what are his own emotions. His work, itself a work of art, illumines the working of the poetic process and of the aesthetic sense. In Kuntaka, the old poets speak again as it were, as though their spirits were but taking up a new instrument and breathing through it.

According to Kuntaka *Pratibhā* or Imagination is the keystone of the poetic arch.[1] Whatever charm there be in poetry, all that is attributable only to *Pratibhā*.[2] The various elements of poetry such as *Rasa, Bhāva* and *Alaṅkāra* have the poet's imagination for their soul and particulary in the case of *Alaṅkāras*, this is very well pronounced.[3] Kuntaka's idea of *Vakrokti* (Lit. 'tilted locution') must not be mistaken to mean an advocacy of an artificial 'poetic diction' as different from that used by men in ordinary

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[1] कविप्रतिभाप्रौढिरेव प्राधान्येनावतिष्ठते । —Vakroktijīvita, p. 13.

[2] यत्किञ्चनापि सौन्दर्यं तत्सर्वं प्रतिभोद्भवम् । Ibid, p. 48.

[3] यद्यपि रसभावालङ्काराणां सर्वेषां कविकौशलमेव जीवितं, तथाप्यलङ्कारस्य विशेषतस्तदनुग्रहं विना... मनाङ्मात्रमपि न वैचित्र्यमुत्प्रेक्षामहे । Ibid, p. 146.

parlance. His theory corresponds more with that of Wordsworth who holds that "While describing things in language really used by men the poets throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby things shall be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect." The poet gives a significance to things around him to which others are insensible. As we saw earlier, the poet is by nature a seer—to his mind things are surrounded by a halo of plentiful suggestion, "a gleam, a light that never was on sea or land,"—and he can see into "the life of things." Being endowed with the power of imagination, the poet can easily embody what he sees in concrete images or pictures in which others can see what the poet sees and thereby feel what he feels. Thus he can make common things interesting by making people see them in the light of new and unsuspected meanings, making the commonest thing to be a spring and centre of thought and feeling.[1] It is by virtue of this fact that poets come to deserve the title of Creators.

About the relative importance of *Śakti* and *Vyutpatti* in poetry, Ānandavardhana laid down that "the poet's Imagination could work such magic that shortcomings in taste and want of learning might remain unnoticed in particular contexts while the poverty of his imagination

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[1] *Cf.* तदेवं सत्तामात्रेणैव परिस्फुरतः पदार्थस्य कोऽप्यलौकिकः शोभातिशयविधायी विच्छित्तिविशेषोऽभिधीयते येन नूतनच्छायामनोहारिणा वास्तवस्थितितिरोधानप्रवणेन निजावभासोद्भासिततत्स्वरूपेण तत्कालोल्लिखित इव वर्णनीयपदार्थपरिस्पन्दमहिमा प्रतिभासते येन विधातृव्यपदेश्यतां प्रतिपद्यन्ते कवयः ।

—Ibid, p. 140.

would at once and invariably catch the attention of the readers."[1] Ānandavardhana substantiates his contention by citing an instance from Kālidasa's *Kumārasaṁbhava*, where the poet describes the amours of Pārvatī and Iśvara. The critic seems to think, that this description is obscene and a result of the poet's want of *vyutpatti*. Yet the poet's *pratibhā* has been able to elevate it to the level of literature. The impropriety ceases to be glaring because it is shrouded in the overwhelming flood of poetic Imagination.

Now the last critic that claims our attention is Rāja-śekhara, the author of the famous work, *Kāvyamīmāṁsā*. Rājaśekhara's attitude towards poets and poetry is very interesting and original. He develops the conception of the *Kāvyapuruṣa*, the spirit of poetry, son of *Sarasvatī* who marries *Sāhityavidyā* or Science of Poetics. He distinguishes minutely between *Śāstra* and *Kāvya* and divides and sub-divides them. Then the relation of Poetic Imagination, Culture and Practice in the making of a poet is elaborately discussed and poets are classified on this score.

Rājaśekhara distinguishes imagination as creative and discriminative, the former having reference to the ability to create and the latter to the faculty of appreciation.

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[1] अव्युत्पत्तिकृतो दोषः शक्त्या संव्रियते कवेः ।
यस्त्वशक्तिकृतो दोषः स झटित्यवभासते ॥ Dhvanyāloka, Ch. III.

XV

THE OFFICE OF THE SANSKRIT POET IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

In our two previous essays, we have considered at some length the reflections of Sanskrit literary critics on the qualifications and equipment of a first-rate poet. An attempt is made in this paper to deal briefly with the end of poetry as envisaged by writers on Sanskrit Poetics and the success actually achieved in practice by poets. Almost all the works on Sanskrit Poetics start with the formulation of the aim or goal of their study in accordance with the dictum *'Prayojanaṁ anuddiśya na mando' pi pravartate'* which was universally accepted by all writers in the various branches of Indian Philosophy. It would appear that in the initial stages poetry did not find support in orthodox circles and they looked at it with grave suspicion. This is evidenced by the charge levelled by them at Poetry: *'Kāvyālāpaṁśca varjayet'*. Writers on poetics are at pains to refute this charge before they enter into discussions about details. The main point in the charge is that poetry is erotic mostly and ministers to realisation of worldly passions and not spiritual values. It is pointed out in reply that the argument does not hold water inasmuch as all the ends of life accepted by the various schools of thought can be realised by having recourse to poetry. Poetry sublimes the passions and paves the way for spiritual bliss. The four ends of life that were universally accepted in India were *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Mokṣa*. Bhāmaha and a host of other writers declare with one voice that all these ends of existence may be

realised by the aid of Poetry.[2] Mokṣa or Release is the *summum bonum*, and the other three *puruṣārthas* lead up to it. These latter are worldy ends in contradistinction to *Mokṣa* which is mostly otherworldly. One would wish to know more about the fruits of poetry here and now rather than hereafter. Writers on poetics are quite eloquent on the worldly benefits also that they claim for poetry. Thus Bharata observes—

'The nature of *Dharma* is brought home to the righteous; those who revel in pleasures of the flesh find their tastes catered to; the disobedient are tamed and the humble are taught self-control. The timid are trained in manliness and energy is endowed to those who consider themselves powerful. The ignorant are enlightened and the wise become learned. Drama will provide rest for those afflicted with misery, fatigue and sorrow.'[3]

Mammaṭa enumerates in his *Kāvyaprakāśa* the several results of poetry which are more or less repeated by all later writers. They are—"Fame, Wealth, Training in social conduct, Prevention of the untoward, Instantaneous bliss, and Pleasing Instruction in the manner of a loving wife".[4]

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[2] *Cf.* धर्मार्थकाममोक्षाणां वैचक्षण्यं कलासु च ।
प्रीतिं करोति कीर्तिं च साधुकाव्यनिबन्धनम् ॥
—Kāvyālaṅkāra, I. 2.

[3] धर्मो धर्मप्रवृत्तानां कामः कामोपसेविनाम् ।
निग्रहो दुर्विनीतानां विनीतानाम् दमक्रिया ॥
क्लीबानां धाष्टर्यजननमुत्साहः शूरमानिनाम् ।
अबुधानां विबोधश्च वैदुष्यं विदुषामपि ॥
दुःखार्तानां श्रमार्तानां शोकार्तानां तपस्विनाम् ।
विश्रान्तिजननं लोके नाटयमेतद्भविष्यति ॥
—Nāṭyaśāstra, 109-113.

[4] काव्यं यशसेऽर्थकृते व्यवहारविदे शिवेतरक्षतये ।
सद्यः परनिर्वृतये कान्तासम्मिततयोपदेशयुजे ॥
—Kāvyaprakāśa, I. 2.

Mammaṭa illustrates each of the above items by quoting instances of poets such as Kālidāsa. Thus it will be seen that poetry was held to minister to the needs of the body as well as the mind, to secure utilitarian as well as spiritual ends. Poetry was not valued merely for the sake of delight that it brought but also for the instruction it combined. The words of W.F.H. King—

"All votes he gains who can unite
Profit with pleasure, and delight
His reader's fancy, all the time
He gives instruction couched."

very well summarise the view of those ancient writers.

However, we have got to take stock of the actual achievement of Sanskrit poetry before we come to a close. In the early beginnings of Sanskrit literature we are faced with fresh primeval imagination of great poets like Vālmīki, Bhāsa, Aśvaghoṣa and Kālidāsa, flooding the reader with feeling and fervour. What Theseus says to Hippolyta in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* can be very aptly applied with reference to those poets.

"The Poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,
And as Imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them into shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name."

They did not strain after poetic effect. Sanskrit Muse in their hands took a natural and at the same time limpid course. It could be aptly said of them in the words of Nīlakaṇṭha Dīkṣita—

'Even the omniscience of God Śiva who adorns his crest with the moon is limited by his cognition of reality; the imagination of poets, however, surpasses even that by virtue of its boundless extension which pervades spaces that even Śiva is not aware of.

Poetry enraptures us in various ways and turns us away from other pursuits. A long stretch of time is spent as if it were a moment. In all this, poetry, indeed, stands comparison with a clever wife.

Poets verily play upon language as musicians do on instruments to produce effects which are appealing to the ear by the melody of sound.'[5]

This praise of poets or *satkavipraśaṁsā* as it is familiarly known, forms an important subject of treatment in many Sanskrit literary compositions. As representative of these, we may select a writer *viz.*, Maṅkhuka, the author of *Śrīkaṇṭha-carita*. His observations are embodied in the ornate language of poetry. We shall content ourselves with translating some relevant verses—

'That profound secret of poetic compositions which a scholar who diligently labours at the feet of a teacher may rarely grasp is traceable only to the efficacy of innate genius. Those that have a desire to enter the field of literature without knowing the secrets of sound learning are like those out to swallow the deadliest poison without first acquainting themselves with the hymns of *Garuḍa*. That well developed power of composing verses, full of sentiments and ripe with several meanings, unfolds itself to only a few.[6] One can

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[5] सदर्थमात्रग्रहणात्प्रतीता सर्वज्ञता सापि शशाङ्कमौलेः ।
प्राप्ता विकासं प्रतिभा कवीनां व्याप्नोति यद्वेत्ति न तच्छिवोऽपि ॥
व्यामोहयन्ती विविधैर्वचोभिर्व्यावर्तयन्त्यन्यकलासु दृष्टिम् ।
कालं महान्तं क्षणवन्नयन्ती कान्तेव दक्षा कविता धिनोति ॥
वाचं विपञ्चीमिव वादयन्ति कर्णामृतेन ध्वनिना कवीन्द्राः ॥
—Śivalīlārṇava.

[6] कस्यापि शक्तिप्रभवात्प्रभावादुदेति तत्काव्यमहारहस्यम् ।
क्लिष्टो गुरूणां सदनेषु नित्यं कश्चिद्बुधश्चेतयते न वा यत् ॥
अज्ञातपाण्डित्यरहस्यमुद्रा ये काव्यमार्गे दधतेऽभिमानम् ।
ते गारुडीयाननधीत्य मन्त्रान्हालाहलास्वादनमारभन्ते ॥
बह्वर्थसिद्धा परिपाकभूमिः कस्यापि वाणी रसवत्युदेति ।
—Śrīkaṇṭhacarita, II, 4-5; 8.

find out the scholarly accomplishment of a poet from the energetic way in which the poem is narrated. Only that emperor of poets is deserving of praise who possesses the white umbrella of fame shining as far as the skies and at whose desire the array of soldiers in the form of meanings and words issue forth at once.[7]

But the latter stages of the Sanskrit literary epoch saw a rapid decline in the taste of the poets as well as the critics. More emphasis began to be laid on outward embellishments and consequently they missed the essence. They began to revel in artificial fancies and conceits and were very fond of wordplay and obscure elaboration. The use of unwieldy compounds, incessant puns, alliterations and assonances, recondite allusions and other literary devices became their favourite *forte*. Thus all the works written in this age of decadent taste may be said to be coins from the same mould, since we find everywhere the same literary flourishes and consummate conceits. The difference can be discerned only in the theme which serves no better purpose than a peg on which to hang their artificial display.

These writers handle their materials as with a gloved hand; they shrink from a plain word without a decorating epithet as from something coarse or undignified. There is veneer and glittering gilt over everything. They speak through a muffler of artifice. They look at things through gauze and turn away their face from the simple truths. Thoughts trip through their verses with the mincing step

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[7] अभ्रंकषोन्मिषितकीर्तिसितातपत्रः
स्तुत्यः स एव कविमण्डलचक्रवर्ती ।
यस्येच्छयेव पुरतः स्वयमुज्जिहीते
द्राग्वाक्यवाचकमयः पृतनानिवेशः ॥

Ibid., II. 39.

of a minuet. They were the victims of a convention *(Kavisamaya)* that sought in language a gaudy substitute for the thing instead of its close fitting garment; and in the realm of pure poetry, where we look for lofty thought and vivid imagination, they were denied open vision and free soaring flights. They sang in a cage and not upon a branch. Though they wield language with such astonishing skill, they seldom work the miracles with it that proclaim the divine poet. The most brilliant electric light is not sunshine.

Even Bāṇabhaṭṭa who himself, in a sense, was partly responsible for this love of artificiality in Indian taste, is constrained to observe in his *Harṣacarita:*

santi śvāna ivāsaṅkhyāḥ jātibhājo gṛhe gṛhe |
utpādakā na bahavaḥ kavayaḥ śarabhā iva ||

in connection with the low ebb to which spontaneity had descended. This fact indeed provoked many good writers to condemn the poetasters in unequivocal terms and it is technically known as *Kukavinindā*. Here again Maṅkhuka may be quoted at length in so far as he is the foremost of such writers—

"How can one who has not suckled sufficiently long the breasts—composition and learning—of mother Sarasvatī, eat day after day the hard food of melodious composition, undeveloped as he is in all the parts? What can those poets who have no knowledge of the terminations of words, who never had any acquaintance with the meanings of words and who have very little of the poetic faculty in them, produce, when they attempt at writing verses worthy of praise? If there be proper thoughts, the expressions are not correct; if the expressions are also correct, there is no style; if there is a style, whence is the proper position of words to come? If the words also are properly joined, there is nothing novel and peculiar in the method; and even when one has all these there is no appropriate depiction of sentiments. Alas! the art of writing verses

is very difficult of comprehension. A poem is not eititled to be ranked with the best of poems if it is not brimming with the flow of charming sentiments though it may be adorned with hundreds of figures, and full of resounding words and excellently composed. Those that have not studied the nature and qualities of poems may have recourse to monkey-tricks every now and then through a desire of getting distinction as poets. But they will fall down perplexed at every step like the young birds which, with unfledged wings, make numerous attempts to fly up per force.[8] Will the Muse of poetry live in the ruined house of that poem, loose in style, not clear in meaning and which cannot stand any criticism— in a house which is set up by being fitted up with the pillars of complementary verses composed by others who are competent and who know the art of building?"[9]

Mankhuka himself, it must not be forgotten, subscribed to the view that

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[8] सरस्वतीमातुरभूच्चिरं न यः कवित्वपाण्डित्यघनस्तनन्धयः ।
कथं स सर्वाङ्गमनाप्तसौष्ठवो दिनाद्दिनं प्रौढिविशेश्नुषमश्नुते ॥
ये नो पदस्थितिजुषः कवयः कथञ्चिन्नार्थप्रथाप्रणयिनः प्रतिभादरिद्राः ।
काव्यग्रहेण किमरोचकिनोऽपि तेऽन्यदल्पीयसो मितरसाच्च बताप्नुवन्ति ॥
अर्थोऽस्ति चेन्न पदशुद्धिरथास्ति सापि नो रीतिरस्ति यदि सा घटना कुतस्त्या ॥
साप्यस्ति चेन्न नववक्रगतिस्तदेतद् व्यर्थं विना रसमहो गहनं कवित्वम् ॥
तैस्तैरलंकृतिशतैरवतंसितोऽपि रूढो महत्यपि पदे धृतसौष्ठवोऽपि ।
नूनं विना घनरसप्रसराभिषेकं काव्याधिराजपदमर्हति न प्रबन्धः ॥
कुर्युस्त्वनुक्षणमशिक्षितलक्षणा ये कापेयमाः कविपदाधिगमस्पृहाया ।
तेऽनुद्गतच्छदपुटा इव पक्षिशाबा व्यग्रा हठोड्डयनभूम्न्यसकृत्पतन्ति ॥

—*Op. cit.*

[9] शैथिल्यस्पृशि संशयावहपदे क्षोदासहिष्णौ कवेः
स्वैरं तत्र सरस्वती निविशते किं काव्यजीर्णौकसि ।
यच्छास्त्रक्रमशिल्पकारुभिरलंभूष्णुप्रकर्षैः
परैर्न्यस्ताभिः कथमप्युपस्कृतिवचः स्थूणाभिरुत्तश्यते ।

—*Op. cit.*

"Mere grace is not enough; a play should thrill
The hearer's soul, and move it at its will"

as is clear from the following stanza of his—

"The equivocation employed in the composition of poets of great merit due to their erudition, obtained by a careful study of the sciences, shines indeed brilliantly. For where has not the digit of the moon obtained a pleasant and faultless state, though he be waning, since he is in contact with the head of Śiva who is the lord of the moveable and the static?"[10]

Nīlakaṇṭha Dīkṣita, however, is not prepared to go to this length. His remarks on the decadent taste that took possession of Classical Sanskrit poetry in its later stages is very striking and significant.

"Though figures of speech become beautiful by the peculiar blend of imagery, they often are to be regretted when employed in poetic composition devoid of suggested sense. It is this latter that is the essence of poetry and in its absence, figures of speech will be as absurd as ornaments put on a corpse whence life has departed. By the unfortunate influence of the *kali* age, people are showing more and more fondness in ostentatious play on words and meanings instead of the Suggestive Pathway (of poetry) which is appreciated by the learned. This can, of course, be compared to their enthusiasm in colloquial speech in place of Vedic lore. Fools are setting about to compose poetry imagining that it consists in mere arrangement of words. They will certainly meet with no better fate than that of children who drown themselves in water thinking that swimming consists in mere movement of hands and feet. Not only do such poetasters suffer a hell of strain themselves, but they make the others also suffer as much and sometimes even

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[10] वाचां वक्रिमपद्धतिः सुविहितव्युत्पत्तिपारायण-
प्रावीण्याप्तगुणस्य हन्त कवितुः सोल्लासमुन्मीलति ।
क्षीणापीन्दुकला चराचरगुरोर्देवस्य चण्डीपते-
श्चूडासङ्गमवाप्य कुत्र न गता हृद्यानवद्यां स्थितिम् ॥

—*Op. cit.*

more. Only the pangs of labour which the mother of an iniquitous child suffers from the moment of its conception up to the last minute of its parturition, can stand comparison with this."[11]

We may borrow the words of an English poet to describe the fate of at least some works in later Sanskrit literature.

"Here is a barrenness of inspiration,
Here is a species of sterility of the mind,
An impotence and a glatulence combined with conspiration of the brain.
When every cerebral contortion's vain."

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[11] अन्योन्यसंसर्गविशेषरम्याप्यलंकृतिः प्रत्युत शोचनीया ।
निर्व्यङ्ग्यसारे कविसूक्तिबन्धे निष्क्रान्तजीवे वपुषीव दत्ता ॥
विद्वत्प्रियं व्यङ्ग्यपथं व्यतीत्य शब्दार्थचित्रेषु कवेर्विलासात् ।
प्राप्तोऽनुरागो निगमानुपेक्ष्य भाषाप्रबन्धेष्विव पामराणाम् ॥
मत्वा पदग्रन्थनमेव काव्यं मन्दाः स्वयं तावति चेष्टमानाः ।
मज्जन्ति बाला इव पाणिपादप्रस्पन्दमात्रं प्लवनं विदन्तः ॥
श्राम्यन्ति यावत्कवयः परेऽपि श्राम्यन्ति तावच्च ततोऽधिकं च ।
गर्भोद्भवादिः प्रसवावसानः क्लेशो हि दुष्पुत्रसुवां च तुल्यः ॥
Śivalīlarṇava.

XVI

INDIAN DEFINITIONS OF POETRY

The abiding value of poetry is attested by the persistence with which generation after generation of critics—Indian as well as Western—have studied, discussed and defended it. By poetry the average man means writings in verse. But in Sanskrit Alaṅkāra works the word Kāvya is used in a wider sense to denote all varieties of literature which claim primarily to be works of art and not contributions to knowledge or science (Śāstra). Every piece of writing which seeks first of all to afford pleasure to its readers—whether it is written in prose like Bāṇa's *Kādambarī* or in verse in Kālidāsa's *Raghuvaṁśa* or in the form of drama as Bhavabhūti's *Uttararāmacarita*—would be called *Kāvya*. "The antithesis of poetry is not prose. but science" said Coleridge and the truth of this statement has been realised by more than one writer of *Alaṇkāraśāstra.* The question therefore, to which they attempt an answer is the differentiation of the poetical from the prosaic.

A close study of the earlier writers on Sanskrit poetics like Bhāmaha, Daṇḍin and Vāmana will reveal that literature was not considered, cultivated and studied in ancient India as an end in itself. It was more often than not considered just a means to serve higher ends such as *Dharma* (Righteousness) or *Artha* (Wealth), *Kīrti* (Fame) or *Prīti* (Popularity). It is Mammaṭa belonging to the 12th century A.D. that gives due credit to the aspect of pleasure that literature affords. He has expressly mentioned in his *vṛtti* (gloss) on the second *Kārikā* of his *Kāvyaprakāśa* that

aesthetic delight overtops all the other uses of poetry.[1] Dhanañjaya, the author of the *Daśarūpaka* has even gone to the extent of making fun of ancient writers on the subject[2] who did not recognise the importance of aesthetic pleasure (*Rasa*). But even these writers appear to have thought that the primary purpose of poetry is the edification of kings. As Kuntaka puts it, 'the avowed object of poetry is the guidance of rulers and princes along channels conducive to the welfare of the state. For, otherwise,—if left to themselves—they may misuse their power'.[3] And in this atmosphere, it is no wonder that we miss in Alaṅkāra works subjective criticism of literary works. But great poets are not of one age, but of all time. Sanskrit theorists concerned themselves with the study of literature and arrived at their own solution of essential or intrinsic characteristics. The qualities of matter as well as of manner were recognised and codified.

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[1] Cf. '*sakalaprayojanamaulibhūtaṁ samanantarameva samudbhūtaṁ vigalitavedyāntaraṁ ānandaṁ.*

—*Kāvyaprakāśa*, p. 8, Jhalkikar's Edn.

[2] See *ānandaniśyandiṣu rūpakeṣu vyutpattimātraṁ phalamalpabuddhiḥ* |
yopītihāsādivadāha sādhustasmai namaḥ svāduparāṅmukhāya ||

—*Daśarūpaka*, p. 2, N. S. Edn.

[3] *Rājaputrāḥ khalu samāsāditasvavibhavāḥ samastajagatīvyavasthākāritām pratipadyamānāḥ ślāghyopadēśaśūnyatayā svatantrāḥ santaḥ samucitasakalavyavahārocchedaṁ pravartayituṁ prabhavantītyetadarthametadvyutpattaye vyatītasaccaritarājacaritaṁ tannidarśanāya nibadhnanti kavayaḥ.*

—*Vakroktijīvita*, p. 4, Calcutta Edn.

See also for the same idea Viśvanātha's *Sāhityadarpaṇa*, p. 19, N. S. Edn.

But what is poetry? Answers to this question are legion and most of the definitions of Poetry which are the commonplaces of Western literary criticism such as "poetry is a criticism of life," "poetry is woven in the iridescent tissue of immortal dreams," "poetry is distilled from the blood of a man's heart", leave the reader none the wiser. No doubt they may satisfy the high-brow but they leave the plain man still with his difficulty. On the other hand, the definitions evolved by Sanskrit theorists have always kept the plain man in view and they are singularly devoid of this defect.

If we analyse the raw material of poetry into its constituent elements we find that it consists of nothing more than words which have some meaning. This analysis served as the basis for many definitions of poetry at the hands of Sanskrit theorists. Many of them are descriptions of poetry rather than definitions. Some give prominence to form, others to meaning intended such as Rasa. In the history of Alaṅkāra literature, almost every author of note has made his own contribution to the problem of the essence of poetry, at the same time trying to pour ridicule on the definitions of others and to justify his own position. In this short paper only a very brief sketch of the chief divergent views and their worth in the light of Western criticism is attempted. For the sake of convenience, the chronological order of the works will be followed.

Bharata's *Nāṭyaśastra* is the earliest work preserved which treats, though incidentally, of the problem of poetry. Bharata is famous in the history of Sanskrit poetics as the exponent of the theory of Rasa. His oft-quoted *Sūtra* relating to *Rasa* is—"*Tatra vibhāvānubhāvavyabhicāri-saṁyogād-rasaniṣpattiḥ*". It should be noted in this connection that

the Rasa theory of Bharata has in view such various subjects as music, histrionics, and dramaturgy. It was left to later commentators like Abhinavagupta to evolve a full-fledged doctrine of Rasa particularly applicable to poetry as such. It is interesting to observe that at the beginning of the 21st chapter of the *Nāṭya-śāstra*, Bharata says "*Itivṛttaṁ tu kāvyasya śarīram parikīrtitam*". 'The plot may be described as the *body* of poetry,' and there can be no doubt that Bharata meant Rasa to be its *ātman* or 'Soul' though he has not mentioned it in so many words. Thus the controversies raging on the body and soul of poetry in Sanskrit Alaṅkāra works seem to have taken their start with Bharata. And when we find Coleridge saying 'The essence of poetry consists in the excitement of emotion for the immediate purpose of pleasure through the medium of beauty', we cannot but think that this was anticipated by sage Bharata hundreds of years ago.

We step into poetics proper in the *Kāvyālaṅkāra* of *Bhāmaha*. His statement *Śabdārthau sahitau kāvyam*' (Word and meaning together constitute poetry) sounds more like a layman's opinion of poetry. It appears so only at first sight. Closer examination reveals to us that the definition of Bhāmaha is not so childish as it looks. Bhāmaha never means that any and every word expressive of some meaning or other makes poetry. It is only the right word expressive of the right meaning that is suitable in the context; and the beauty of such compositions is achieved with the help of (a set of) figures of speech and qualities of style. Avoidance of patent defects which are also catalogued, goes a long way in raising a piece of writing to the level of literature. As W. Basil Worsfold says, "The three

distinct and characteristic elements of excellence, the presence of which can be discerned in varying degrees in works of literature, are—matter, manner and the capacity to please",[1] and Bhāmaha seems to have taken into account all these in framing his definition of poetry. The implication and significance of the word *sahitau* in Bhāmaha's definition quoted above may very well be summarised in the words of Prof. A.C. Bradley thus:—"If substance and form mean anything in the poem, then each is involved in the other, and the question in which of them the value lies has no sense."[2] Poetry essentially consists of form and substance and just as there is no substance apart from form, so there is no form apart from substances. It follows, therefore, that in poetry, form and substance must have a mutual and innate relation.

Now the question arises whether Bhāmaha was thoroughly ignorant of the theory of *Rasa* so ably propounded by Bharata. A perusal of the *Kāvyālaṅkāra* will reveal that he was aware of it but he did not assign the highest place to it. As Ruyyaka says in his *Alaṅkāra-sarvasva,* Bhāmaha and his followers gave that paramount position to figures of speech.[3] *Rasa* was included under one of them, Viz. *Rasavat*. But Bhāmaha does not at all go against the views of Bharata when he speaks of figures of speech, for Bharata had also recognised and classified them. It is not certain whether they part company even as

[1] *Judgment in Literature*, p. 18.

[2] *Oxford Lectures on Poetry*, p. 16.

[3] Cf. *tadevamalaṅkārā eva kāvye pradhānaṁ iti prācyānāṁ mataṁ.*
—*Alaṅkārasarvasva*, p. 7, Trivandrum Edn.

regards *Rasa*, since Bharata nowhere treats of *Rasa* only in respect of *Kāvya* to the exclusion of all other arts. Figures of speech surely charm the reader and beautify the design; but if they are overdone, they elicit at best mere admiration and as a matter of fact, they most often create disgust. Even as in the English Literature of the 17th century, in the history of classical Sanskrit Literature also, the employment of the various figures of speech, both of sound *(Śabdālaṅkāra)* and of sense *(Arthālaṅkāra)*, became the avowed object of the poets—more often of poetasters—after the period of Aśvaghoṣa and Kālidāsa. 'Such pleasure as they give is purely intellectual and is intellectually frivolous'. But this was the pleasure sought and found by the intelligentsia *(Sahṛdayas)* of the period of decline and fall of Sanskrit Literature. Simile and metaphor and a host of other things quite inessential to poetry were their great engrossing pre-occupation and were prized the more in proportion as they were far-fetched. The poets' ideal was to startle by novelty and amuse by ingenuity. This school of Bhāmaha which has come to be called the Alaṅkāra school by modern writers on Sanskrit Poetics had, in later times, many followers such as Udbhaṭa and Rudraṭa. These later writers—Daṇḍin included among them (?)—either add new figures to the list of existing ones or classify them according to some other principle. In essence they do not differ from Bhāmaha in holding that Alaṅkāras are all in all in poetry.

The next important writer after Bhāmaha is Daṇḍin. His definition of Kāvya is—'*Śarīraṁ tāvadiṣṭārthavyavacchinnā padāvalī*.' (With respect to the body it consists of a series of words, qualified by the sense which the poet wishes to express.) One might be tempted at first sight to correlate

it with Jagannātha's definition of poetry in his *Rasagaṅgādhara,* viz. *'ramaṇīyārthapratipādakaḥ śabdaḥ kāvyam'* and say that he gives more emphasis to the word or the form than to its substance which is given the subordinate place of a *viśeṣaṇa* (adjective) in the latter definition. This is what Sovani and Kane have actually done. But *iṣṭārtha* does not mean *ramaṇīyārtha*. It means *vivakṣitārtha* as Taruṇa Vācaspati has pointed out and should be translated as 'sought to be expressed'. Daṇḍin gives a very wide significance to the term *Alaṅkāra* which indicates some progress from Bhāmaha. He says—*'Kāvyaśobhākārān dharmānalaṅkāran pracakṣate'*. (All attributes adding beauty to poetry go by the name of *Alaṅkāra*). Thus the *Guṇa,* and *Rīti* or *Mārga* are also included under it. So to differentiate him from the *Alaṅkāra* school of Bhāmaha who assigns the first place to figures of speech, he has often been accredited as the propagator of the *Rīti* school, though the word *Rīti* itself never occurs in his *Kāvyādarśa*. He accepts the *Vaidarbhī* and *Gauḍīyā* styles whose essence consist of *Guṇas* which were later on well defined by Vāmana. Thus though Daṇḍin is in the main a follower of Bhāmaha, he differs from him in more than one detail.

As we have already seen, although the word *śarīra* has been used both by Bharata and Daṇḍin in their definitions of poetry and though this implies that they must have had something else in mind as the soul residing in that body, they have not expressly mentioned it anywhere in their works and the credit of having first tackled the problem of *Ātman* or soul of *Kāvya* undoubtedly goes to Vāmana. When he declares in one of the Sūtras of the *Kāvyālaṅkārasūtravṛtti* that style or diction is the soul of poetry *(Rītirātmā Kāvyasya),* it is nothing but Daṇḍin's

position pushed to its logical conclusion. In minor matters of detail as, for example, the *Rītis* being *Guṇas,* he generally follows his predecessors. Vāmana's doctrine of *Rīti* seems to correspond to that of the English school of literary criticism which held that 'Style is the man'. The concrete features of a good style of writing enumerated by Schopenhauer in his essay on "Authorship and Style" can be brought under one or the other of Vāmana's *Guṇas* and as such under one of the *Rītis.* According to Schopenhauer, thoughts must get their clearest, finest and most powerful expression. Clarity, beauty and power are the three qualities emphasised by him. By clarity he means the expression of thoughts "as purely, clearly, definitely and concisely as ever possible". This is secured by the use of words which are precise and apt.[1] The truth underlying the sharp distinction between *Vaidarbhī* and *Gauḍīyā Rītis* which is recognised by Daṇḍin and Vāmana seems to be borne out by a passage found in Winchester.[2]—"There are, in general, two opposite tendencies in personal expression: on the one hand to clearness and precision; on the other to largeness and profusion. The difference between the two may be seen by comparing such poetry as that of Matthew Arnold with that of Tennyson or such prose as that of Newman with that of Jeremy Taylor. Minds of one class insist on sharply divided ideas, on clearness of image, on temperance and precision of epithet. Their style we characterise as chaste or classic. The other class have... more abundant and vivid imagery, more wealth of colour,

[1] Quoted by V. Raghavan in his article on *Rīti, Kuppuswami Sastri Commemoration Volume,* p. 107.

[2] *Some principles of Literary criticism,* Chapter 4th.

but less sharpness of definition. Their thoughts seem to move through a lush growth of imagery. They tend to be ornate and profuse in manner, eager in temper." But after all is said and done, Vāmana's view of style as the life of poetry, empties, to borrow the words of Prof. A.C. Bradley, 'poetry of its meaning. It is really a doctrine of form for form's sake. It is of no consequence what a poet says, so long as he says the things well. The 'what' is poetically indifferent; it is the 'how' that counts. Matter is nothing; the form, the treatment is everything'.[1] In poetic experience we never apprehend expression without reference to meaning. It is a unified experience where both are cognised and appreciated simultaneously. One cannot be abstracted from the other. But in theory it is interesting to note that it has found support in the greatest poet-critic of Germany, Göethe, when he regards poetry as primarily an art and insists upon form, and power of artistic expression in all poetry worth the name.

Next comes *Ānandavardhana* whose *Dhvanyāloka* is an epoch-making work in the history of Sanskrit Poetics. His unique contribution to the *Alaṅkāraśāstra* is the doctrine of *Dhvani* or suggestion though he himself claims for it previous currency among Indian critics.[2] *Dhvanikāvya* is defined as follows—"That kind of poetry in which the directly expressed word and sense become subordinate to suggested sense is called *Dhvani* by scholars."[3] Suggestive poetry is

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[1] *Oxford Lectures on Poetry*, p. 7.

[2] Cf. *kāvyasyātmā dhvaniriti budhairyaḥ samāmnātapūrvaḥ...* (*Dhvanyāloka*, 1. 1).

[3] *yatrārthaḥ śabdo vā tamarthamupasarjanīkṛta-svārthau* ।
vyaṅktaḥ kāvyaviśeṣaḥ sa dhvaniriti sūribhiḥ kathitaḥ ॥
—*Ibid*, 1. 13.

poetry *par excellence.* But poetry devoid of suggestion is also given a place under the class of *Kāvya.* It is *Citrakāvya.* If *Dhvani* were the soul of poetry, then, nothing bereft of it could be poetry. Then again, suggestion or *Dhvani* is not uniform. It is triple in character. The suggestion may be of (1) *Vastu* (matter) or (2) *Alaṅkāra* (embellishment) or (3) *Rasa.* The highest place is given only to *Rasa-Dhvani* and not to the other two. But poetry where the plot or figures of speech are suggested is not excluded from the domain of poetry but are given a subordinate position. This also involves a difficulty as *Viśvanātha* has pointed out.[1] Riddles and conundrums, where also there is some suggested sense other than the expressed one, will have to be brought under the class of *Vastudhvani.* Further, when *Ānandavardhana* says—

yo'rthassahṛdayaślāghyaḥ kāvyātmeti vyavasthitaḥ ।
vācyapratīyamānākhyau tasya bhedhāvubhau smṛtau ॥

—*Op. Cit,* p. 12., N.S. Edn.

there seems to be contradiction of what he himself said earlier. Here the author declares that '*Artha*' is the soul of poetry and that *Vācya* (expressed) and *Pratīyamāna* (suggested) are two varieties of *Artha.* It logically follows that *Vācyārtha* is as much the soul of poetry as the *Pratīyamāna*- or *Vyaṅgyārtha.* Mahimabhaṭṭa in his *Vyaktiviveka* has not forgotten to point out this inconsistency, among many others, in the Dhvanyāloka.

Despite all these contradictions (which are remedied by later writers like *Viśvanātha*), the fact remains that the doctrine of *Dhvani* marked a great advance in the history of Sanskrit poetics. The centre of gravity shifted gradually

[1] Cf. *Śāhityadarpaṇa,* p. 4, P. V. Kane's Edn.

from *Śabdārtha, Alaṅkāra, Guṇa* and *Rīti* to *Dhvani* and indeed the doctrine is sound in its essentials. It is not merely the presence of some excellence or of figures that accounts for a piece being called great literature. Words may be said to lie dead in a dictionary, skeletons without flesh and blood. "But as soon as they escape into a living sentence, they gain individuality and catch subtle shades of meaning which no dictionary can define, a meaning not purely intellectual, and capable of infinite variation according to the genius of him that uses them. We say that such language suggests more than it expresses.[1] One great merit of Ānandavardhana is that he fixed once and for all the relative positions of *Rasa, Guṇa, Doṣa* and *Alaṅkāra* which were tacitly adopted by later writers. If we consider figuratively poetry to be a person, word and meaning would consitute his body and *Rasa* his life; excellences of style would be like the qualities of valour and wisdom. Defects in style would be similar to the ailments like lameness and blindness. *Rītis* would be comparable to the harmonious disposition of the limbs and poetic figures to the ornaments to be worn on the body.

We may note in this connection that Dr. J. Nobel appears to have made a mistake in thinking that "*sahṛdaya-hṛdayāhlādi-śabdārthamayatvameva kāvyalakṣaṇam,*" is the definition of the Dhvanikāra.[2] The above quoted statement which occurs in the *Vṛtti* on the first *Kārikā* forms part of the doctrines of the objector. The paragraph starts with the words *Anye brūyuḥ*. It is the view held by critics who did not admit of *Dhvani* and not by the Dhvanikāra.

[1] *De Selinconrt 'Oxford Lectures on Poetry'*, p. 10.
[2] *Foundations of Indian Poetry*, p. 81.

Another noteworthy definition of *Kāvya* is that of Mammaṭa, a great authority on Sanskrit *Alaṅkāraśāstra.* It is—"*tadadoṣau śabdārthau saguṇāvanalaṅkṛtī punaḥ kvāpi.*" It has been almost verbatim accepted by Hemacandra. Poetry consists, according to these writers, of word and sense, both combined, free from faults, full of excellences and sometimes even without figures of speech. This definition, it will be seen, does not in essence, differ from that of Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin. A noteworthy feature of Mammaṭa is the subordinate place he assigns to *Alaṅkāras* or figures of speech. In this he has been influenced by the *Dhvani*-school. But it is a compliment to his conservatism that he did not brush aside the theories of the ancients though he was convinced of the truth of the later *Dhvani* doctrine.

Viśvanātha, though generally a follower of Mammaṭa has mercilessly criticised each and every word of the latter's definition. These criticisms, it must be noted, are well-pointed and, for the most part, justified. The logical conclusion of the theory of *Dhvani* meant giving the highest place to *Rasa* in all poetry. Mammaṭa and to some extent even Ānandavardhana felt shy of saying it in so many words and evaded the issue. The credit of having boldly come forward with his definition "*vākyaṁ rasātmakaṁ kāvyaṁ*" goes to Viśvanātha. What his predecessors had been tacitly taking for granted without acknowledging it was given expression to in his definition which is theoretically precise. But from the practical point of view, descriptions like those of a flowing river or a blooming flower, where the chrrm consists in the expressed sense or the figures of speech present, do not come under the purview of poetry according to this definition. The definition

serves little or no purpose from the student's point of view because unless he knows the doctrine of *Rasa* in all its details, he cannot understand the full import of the definition. It is but poor consolation to be told that in all poetry where there is no *Rasa,* there is at least *Rasābhāsa,* a semblance of *Rasa*, which indeed helps us in calling it poetry though not poetry of the highest kind. For all practical purposes, Mammaṭa's definition is very serviceable. Thus though Viśvanātha's definition is not immune from defects it goes a long way in assigning the proper place to *Rasa* which was faintly envisaged by Bharata and more vividly elucidated by Ānandavardhana. As against the *Rīti* school, it opens their eyes to the fact that 'there is a conception of poetry which is not fulfilled by pure language and liquid versification, with the simple and, so to speak, colourless pleasure which they afford; but involves the presence in them of something which moves and touches in a special and recognisable way'.[1] The most serious objection to the definition of Viśvanātha is that a ban shall have to be placed on a bulk of poetical literature which has distinctly a charm in it but has not necessarily in it any predominant sentiment. Such things have been generally accepted as coming under the head of poetry by a majority of literary critics of all ages and climes.

Jagannātha, the author of the *Rasagaṅgādhara* is the last great writer on Sanskrit Poetics. According to him a *Kāvya* is a word which conveys a charming sense *(Ramaṇīyārthapratipādakaḥ śabdaḥ).* Thus the essence of *Kāvya,* according to this definition consists in charmingness or *Ramaṇīyatā*. This charmingness belongs to an idea whose

[1] A.E. Housman—'The Name and Nature of Poetry', p. 11.

knowledge produces an extraordinary delight. And the extraordinariness or *lokottaratva* is something which can be known only by experience and which may be styled as *camatkāratva* or strikingness. This *camatkāratva* is the essence of poetry which it is impossible to define or describe in so many words, but which can be only felt by a person who is a *sahṛdaya,* who has the faculty which springs from culture and ripe judgment.[1]

Against this definition, however, it may be said that it does not help a student to recognise or distinguish what composition deserves to be called *Kāvya.* To say simply that what is charming or striking is a *Kāvya* does not take us any further. Besides Jagannātha is of opinion that the word and meaning *(Śabda* and *Artha)* do not **together** constitute poetry. According to him the words alone are referred to by the name *Kāvya* as is corroborated by everyday-experience. People speak of poetry being read loudly, of its meaning being understood and sometimes of its meaning being not understood though poetry was heard, all the while having in their minds the idea of words.[2] It has already been pointed out when considering Bhāmaha's definition that questions of this kind pertaining to the relative importance of word or meaning in poetry are futile.

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[1] *ramaṇīyatā ca lokottarāhlādajanakajñānagocaratā. Lokottaratvam cāhlādagataścamatkāratvāparaparyāyo' nubhavasākṣiko jātiviśeṣah. Karaṇam ca tadavacchinne bhāvanāviśeṣaḥ punaḥpunaranusandhānātmā.*

—The *Rasagaṅgādhara*, p. 4, N. S. Edn.

[2] Cf. "*Śabdārthayugalaṁ na kāvyaśabdavācyam. Mānābhāvāt; kāvyamuccaiḥ paṭhyate, kāvyādartho'vagamyate, kāvyam śrutamartho na jñātaḥ, ityādi viśvajanīnavyavahārataḥ; pratyuta viśēṣaśabdasyaiva kāvyapadārthatvapratipatteśca*". *Op. Cit.*, p. 5.

Before concluding, two other theories of poetry advanced by Kuntaka and Kṣemendra respectively may be noticed. These have been reserved to the last instead of being treated earlier in so far as they represent not so much new theories of *Kāvya* but attempts at bringing all the specific conceptions of *Rīti, Rasa, Guṇa, Alaṅkāra* and *Dhvani* under a more general principle. Kuntaka took the cue from Bhāmaha and highly elaborated the doctrine of *Vakrokti* in his work *Vakroktijīvita*. According to him *Vakrokti* is the essence of poetry and by *Vakrokti* he understands the peculiarity capable of producing extra-ordinary charm *(Lokottaracamatkārakārivaicitrya)*. Kuntaka distinguishes six varieties of *Vakratā* under the one or the other of which he brings in all figures of speech, *Rasa, Dhvani, Guṇa* and *Rīti*.

Kṣemendra in his *Aucityavicāracarcā* maintains that *Aucitya* or appropriateness is the essence of *Rasa* which in its turn constitutes the most important thing in *Kāvya*. He defines *Aucitya* as the character of that which is suitable or appropriate in its relation to another.[1] In the doctrine of *Aucitya*, Kṣemendra appears simply to develop what had already been hinted at in the *Dhvanyāloka* where we find—

anaucityādṛte nānyad rasabhaṅgasya kāraṇaṁ ।
prasiddhaucityabandhastu rasasyopaniṣat parā ॥

"There is no other thing which mars *Rasa* than impropriety. The supreme secret of *Rasa* consists in observing the established rules of propriety." Many varieties of *Aucitya* are enumerated and illustrated in Kṣemendra's

[1] *ucitaṁ prāhurācāryāḥ sadṛśaṁ kila yasya yat* |
ucitasya ca yo bhāvaḥ tadaucityaṁ pracakṣate ||

—Ibid. —*Kārikā*, 7, N. S. Edn.

work. *Rasa, Guṇa, Rīti, Alaṅkāras,* etc., can be useful only when there is *Aucitya* in them. It is worthy of notice that Kṣemendra has the sense of humour to quote his own verses often to illustrate *Anaucitya.*

To conclude: in Sanskrit Poetics the definition of poetry forms a veritable battle-ground. With the utmost subtlety and hair-splitting distinctions, every rhetorician has come forward to justify his own definition of Poetry and to reject the definitions of others. Even this rapid survey of the different schools of Sanskrit Poetics has revealed to us that there has been a steady growth in the conception of the nature of poetry. From the beginnings in Bhāmaha, where the exterior of poetry receives consideration at length, we come to attempts at solving the inner core of it in Vāmana and see their successful solution in Ānandavardhana. Later writers like Viśvanātha and Mammaṭa made explicit the suggestions embodied in the *Dhvanyāloka.* Sanskrit theories of poetry do not in any way suffer by comparison with the recognised theories of Western criticism.

XVII

THE ESSENCE OF POETRY

I

We all know that poets have been honoured in all cultured communities since the dawn of civilization, and the abiding value of poetry has never been contested either by apostles of religion in the past or by the votaries of science in our own times. But the question, 'What is poetry?' recurs again and again in the history of literary criticism and there is no end to the answers that have been given. In general terms if we say that poetry gives us delight which is unique or *sui generis,* it is perhaps begging the question; but it is nonetheless very true. Poets and critics have all freely expressed their views about poetry; their very diversity even with regard to the 'essence' of poetry indicates that it must be something very elusive, if not mysterious. Everyone can enjoy poetry; but even masterminds may fumble when it comes to defining its essence. The few words that I might say now can have no pretensions, then, to finality; they can represent at the most an individual approach though I would endeavour to base my remarks on the findings of ancient Indian theorists.

II

It is easier, I believe, to indicate what poetry is not than to explain what poetry is. Poetry is not common talk on the one hand (वार्ता) and organised science on the other (शास्त्र). 'The sun has set; the birds are returning to their nests' is just talk, not poetry, though couched

in metre. (गतोऽस्तमर्कः भातीन्दुः यान्ति वासाय पक्षिणः । इत्येवमादि किं काव्यम्). Such is the opinion of Bhāmaha, our earliest critic. He goes on to add that by persistent study and application one might master science; but poetry comes only to the gifted (गुरूपदेशादध्येतुं शास्त्रं जडधियोऽप्यलम् । काव्यं तु जायते जातु कस्यचित्प्रतिभावतः). That unique gift of the poet, which cannot be acquired, is imagination or pratibhā. But readers too possess it in some degree, though their imagination is not creative like that of the poet. They are sahṛdayas; that is why they respond to poetry.

III

There are different kinds of poetry depending on differences of temperament and culture, of tradition and purpose, in the poets. There are simple ballads treating of 'old, unhappy, far-off things and battles long ago'. For their enjoyment all that is required in the reader is a simple taste for poetry. There are heroic epics which are narrative in theme and these also have a universal appeal. The secret of their appeal is to be sought in the fundamental passions of man which find a ready echo in every heart, and which have found imaginative and noble expression. Music and rhythm, metaphors and similes, will be there no doubt; but these will not attract special attention. On the other hand we may have satires where human failings are caricatured. We have, of course, lyrics where music and mood mingle harmoniously. Whatever the *genre*, if the poet is a highly educated one, all his learning and wisdom will be distilled in his lines and a corresponding degree of cultivated sensibility is demanded of the reader. If we agree that in all these the 'essence' of poetry does exist, our

definition of it must be as inclusive as possible, and not exclusive.

IV

Let us take an example:

हारो नारोपितः कण्ठे मया विश्लेषभीरुणा ।
इदानीमावयोर्मध्ये सरित्सागरपर्वताः ॥ [*Mahānāṭaka*]

Even a wreath I wouldn't place on thy neck
Lest it should come between us;
But now between us stand, alas,
Rivers, oceans and hills.

Rāma is addressing his lost Sītā in these words which find a ready echo in our hearts. We share his poignant suffering and we feel the beauty of the language simultaneously. The language of the poet is somewhat conventional and figurative because the theme demands it; and is not just decorative. We recognise the beauty of poetic language by the out-of-the-way grace acquired by words and meanings (शब्दार्थालङ्कार). And the haunting sweetness of diction is unmistakable (i.e. माधुर्यगुण), the hallmark of ehe Graceful style (वैदर्भीरीति). Such would be the rough analysis of the literary theorist. But the very starting point of his analysis is his enjoyment of the sentiment, which is *Rasa*, Love-in-separation (विप्रलम्भशृङ्गार) here. The poet has invested his expression with beauty by his *original* use of figures and sung of a theme which cannot fail to stir the sensitive reader to his very depths.

In India Vāk or Speech has always been described as कामधेनु, the Celestial Cow that milks whatever you ask for. The poet is indeed her pet calf since the best part of her milk is got by him:—

वाग्धेनुर्दुग्ध एकं हि रसं यद्बालतृष्णया ।
तेन नास्य समः स स्याद्योगिभिर्दुह्यते हि यः ॥

The essence of poetry, then, is the enjoyment (rasa) of the cultivated reader (sahṛdaya) rich in poetic sensibility, an enjoyment which is valued for its own sake and which on analysis involves the appreciation of distinct qualities (guṇas) in style (rīti)—qualities inhering in form (śabda) as well as content (artha), and which more often than not reveal turns of speech or imagery (alaṅkāra) deliberately made remote from the common ways of daily talk or of science. But how do words in poetry serve to evoke aesthetic delight, the same words which we use for other purposes in our lives? That is indeed a question which takes us to the depths of the poetic process on the one hand and realms of psychology on the other. The answer ably indicated by Ānandavardhana is *Dhvani* or suggestion. The dictionary use of words and the emotive use of the same words in poetry are to be carefully distinguished and such a unique power is the very secret of elusive poetry. That is the very test by which we recognise the true from false in poetry. If figures of speech and high styles do not subserve the central function (vyāpāra) of poetry which is Dhvani, they ring artificial on our ears and there is no aesthetic enjoyment which is of the very essence of true poetry. All that glitters is not gold though we all know that gold does glitter. This comprehensive principle of poetry has been called *Aucitya* or Propriety and impropriety of any kind is another name for bad taste:—

अनौचित्यादृते नान्यद्रसभङ्गस्य कारणम् ।
प्रसिद्धौचित्यबन्धस्तु रसस्योपनिषत्परा ॥

We could now sum up our position in some such way as this: The essence of poetry is rooted in the capacity of man to find unequalled delight when what is significant in life, i.e., the inmost experiences of the human personality in relation to fellow-men, external Nature or God, is presented in an organised way through the Imagination. A true poet is gifted with this magic power of insight and his work, when true to his inspiration (रसावेश), will embody insights as valid as, and perhaps complimentary to, those which are the object of the discursive and conceptual language. But poetry is an art, first and foremost. That is to say, it embodies skill in the use of language; and the recognition of this skill involves perception of qualities of style and figures of speech. They are, like so many labels, tentative, not final. They should not lead one to a false dichotomy between matter and manner which are interfused inseparably (वागर्थाविव संपृक्तौ..). It is this skill of the poet which is responsible for rending the film of familiarity from even the most commonplace things he may be describing (दृष्टपूर्वा अपि ह्यर्थाः काव्ये रसपरिग्रहात् । सर्वे नवा इवाभान्ति मधुमास इव द्रुमाः) and the measure of his success can only be judged when the marriage between manner and matter is complete, when art does not outrun the demands made by emotion. Poetry thus partakes something of the divine mystery and truly the poet has been bracketed with the Seer (नानृषिः कविरित्युक्तं). His genius brings a freshness of vision and create an ideal world of beauty and joy even out of the most unwholesome material* and add 'the gleam,

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* *Cf.* रम्यं जुगुप्सितमुदारमथापि नीचं
ग्राम्यं प्रसादि गहनं विकृतं च वस्तु ।

Continued Next Page.

The light that never was on sea or land,
The consecration, and the poet's dream.'

Such is the essence of poetry, an amalgam of the imaginative, emotional, intellectual and artistic elements.

— *Continued from Page 228.*

यद्वाप्यवस्तु कविभावकभाव्यमानं
नास्त्येव यन्न रसतां समुपैति लोके ॥

Whether beautiful or ugly, exalted or lowly, furious or tender, profound or perverse, or even some airy abstraction, there is no subject which does not become aesthetic, once it is transformed by the imagination of the poet.

XVIII

RUYYAKA'S VIEWS ON THE NATURE OF POETIC CONTENT

I

Early Indian rhetoricians like Bhāmaha were concerned more with definitions and divisions of particular figures of speech or excellences in poetry than with an investigation of the general principle of beauty underlying the *alaṅkāras* or *guṇas*. Their scattered hints, however, served as a starting point for philosophical enquiry in the succeeding period (9th—11th century) which saw the birth of great classics of Sanskrit literary criticism like the *Dhvanyāloka* and the *Vakroktijīvita*. The sheet-anchor of the New Criticism was the recognition of the primary importance of *Rasa* as the life-infusing principle of poetry; and even great critics of the *Dhvani* school—Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka and Mahimabhaṭṭa, for instance,—were agreed on this crucial fact. They differed only in their methods of logically explaining *rasa* or aesthetic experience.

II

It would appear that these philosophical critics themselves regarded their activity as supplementing the analytical work of the Old School. Though they point out that the ancients were lacking in a philosophical approach, they at the same time recognise the utility of *alaṅkāras* and *guṇas*. Due regard is paid to the rules of the older theorists in all these matters, and their definitions of particular figures or excellences accepted without hesitation by the new critics.

The credit of having first attempted a synthesis of all the material in Sanskrit poetics goes to Mammaṭa; and his work Kāvyaprakāśa has long been accepted as an authoritative text-book. But we miss even in this book a real fusion of the two approaches, the practical and the philosophical. Some of the chapters in the *Kāvyaprakāśa* appear to hang loose, without any strong connecting link. And this is true also of the *Sāhityadarpaṇa,* a later text-book by Viśvanātha.

But Ruyyaka, the immediate successor of Mammaṭa in the field of Sanskrit poetics, is free from the above charge and deserves to be studied for the sake of his approach, which does not mix up the Old and the New Schools, and treats both separately acknowledging his debt to both. He keeps the two attitudes apart and distinct in his work, the *Alaṅkārasarvasva,* and is faithful to the spirit of both the schools in his treatment of figures. He could achieve a measure of precision and clarity, rare in Sanskrit poetics, by deliberately limiting his field to the treatment of figures exclusively.

III

Ruyyaka starts his work by surveying the various schools of Sanskrit poetics, and unmistakably shows how the authorities on the subject of Figures of Speech are the Old Critics *(Cirantanas)* and how the ideas of the Dhvani school provide the best logical explanation of the 'essence' or 'soul' of poetry, the soul which is the veritable *alaṅkārya.* He next addresses himself to the task of expounding the *alaṅkāras* systematically, and groups the *arthālaṅkāras* under the following heads:—

(i) *bhedābhedatulya*—where both difference and identity are manifest between the things compared; e.g., simile.

(ii) *abhedapradhāna*—where identity between the two is super-imposed, e.g., metaphor.

(iii) (a) *adhyavasāyamūla—(sādhya)* where poetic fancy is prominent (though the thing described is also mentioned) e.g., ūtprekṣā.

(b) *adhyavasāyamūla—(siddha)* where poetic fancy involves exclusive mention of the imagined object, e.g. *atiśayokti.*

(iv) *gamyamāna-aupamya*—where likeness is just suggested

(a) through words, e.g., *dīpaka,* or

(b) through the sentence as a whole, e. g., *prativastūpamā.*

(v) *bhedapradhāna*—where difference is prominent e.g., *vyatireka.*

(vi) *vyaṅgyamūla*—where beauty is due to the suggestive element of epithets, as in *samāsokti* and of puns, as in *śleṣa.*

(vii) *virodhamūla*—where contrast is the principle of beauty, e.g., *virodha, asaṅgati.*

(viii) *śṛṅkhalābandha*—where serial arrangement is striking, e.g., *sāra, ekāvalī.*

(ix) *tarkanyāyamūla*—where the logical mode of reasoning is poetically utilised, e.g., *kāvyaliṅga.*

(x) *vākyanyāyamūla*—where the rules of syntax are poetically utilised, e.g., *yathāsaṁkhya.*

(xi) *lokanyāyamūla*—where common experience is poetically utilised, e.g., *vakrokti,* etc.

IV

Here, for the first time, the total number of sixty and odd figures of speech is brought under an intelligible scheme. It emerges from Ruyyaka's treatment that the sources of poetic beauty are mostly imagery, based on likeness or contrast, explicit or implicit, and through expressions which are themselves ordered or patterned either after the manner of the laws of rhythm, logic and syntax, or by conscious addition of the graces of speech in daily usage, such as wit and humour, irony and paradox. The element of oddity in worldly experience is also utilised to advantage by the poet in figures like *pratyanīka*. It is clear throughout that the very measure of poetic genius lies in the artful use of *alaṅkāras* (whose general name is, by the way, *vakrokti)*, and that the poetic process is nothing but a deliberate departure from the usual mode of gossip *(vārtā)* and systematized thought *(śāstra)*.

In other words, *alaṅkāras* are virtually made to appear as the 'natural' language of poetry, and not just outward 'ornaments' to be added or discarded. This position is at variance with the philosophical analysis of the Dhvani school, according to which the very name *alaṅkāra* loses all significance unless the literary critic can point to some 'suggested' (*vyaṅgya*) *alaṅkārya* or soul, viz., *Rasa*, *Alaṅkāra* or *Vastu*, the three kinds of *Dhvani*. It is a credo of that school that poetic beauty is felt only in proportion to the beauty of the suggested emotion or mood, figure of speech or idea; and the first kind (viz., *rasādi-dhvani*) is the most beautiful.

V

We are thus faced with the crucial question of literary criticism—can *alaṅkāras* contribute to poetic beauty directly, or can they do so only by being instrumental and paving the way for the suggested meaning? An acceptance of the Dhvani theory will lead us inevitably to the conclusion that all instances of *alaṅkāras* without appreciable suggestion are 'inferior' and third-rate poetry.[1] Conservative critical thought in Sanskrit is not prepared to concede this. The practice of our Mahākāvya writers and the opinion of orthodox commentators cannot be left out of account in this connection. They point unmistakably to the fact that *alaṅkāras* were deemed to be direct agents of poetic beauty and not just external appendages. While the Dhvani theory might highlight the critic's appreciation and refine his judgement by making him alive to the significant contribution, to the total tone, of even the minutest elements of language like particles and pronouns, affixes, and suffixes, it does not throw much light on the workings of the poetic mind, because of its over-emphasis on *Rasa*. Aesthetic psychology, founded on the experience of the critic alone, is bound to be as partial as that grounded on the creative experience exclusively. All the same, the latter is at least as much, if not more, important to a sound literary theory. But Indian poetics before Ruyyaka appears to have omitted a detailed analysis of it. Kuntaka, whose endeavour was to explain the workings of the poetic imagination, more or less followed the example of the masters of Dhvani and could

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[1] M. Hiriyanna, 'Art Experience-2', *Art Experience* (Kavyalaya) p. 29 *ff*.

not contribute much to this aspect of the matter. To the philosopher-cum-critic Abhinavagupta we owe the exposition of the Rasa theory in a way which comprehends both the poet's creative moment and the critic's aesthetic experience, in one sweep of metaphysical or mystic theory; but it almost ignores the fundamental difference between the two.[2] Although the poet and the critic may be the twin faces of poetry, both entitled to similar delight, no one can gainsay that the poet is a creative artist primarily, while the critic is a passive contemplator of the given artistic beauty. The secret of the poet's art or technique cannot be laid bare until beauty due to form is also considered, and related to the beauty of content. How the impersonal emotion of the poet objectifies itself in adequate form is the essential question of literary criticism,[3] and Ruyyaka appears to be the only Sanskrit theorist who offers an answer to this puzzling question. His answer, naturally, takes him deep into the nature of creative vision, with its parallels in the borderland of mystic vision, accepted by almost all schools of Indian philosophy (expect *Pūrvamīmāṁsā*) and systems of theology (*Āgamas*).

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[2] *Cf.* The present writer's monograph *Rasollāsa* in Kannada (Mysore University).

[3] *Cf.* (i) "The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an 'objective correlative'."

—T. S. Eliot, *Selected Essays*, p. 145.

(ii) "Great poetry may by made without the direct use of any emotion whatever; composed out of feelings solely."

—*Ibid.*, p. 18.

(iii) "The poet has, not a 'personality' to express, but a particular medium...in which impressions and experiences combine in peculiar and unexpected ways."—*Ibid.*, p. 20.

VI

While all the armoury of *alaṅkāras* noted and classified by Ruyyaka relate to poetic 'form', there are three which relate primarily to the poetic 'content' and, therefore, refuse to be included under any of the broad heads of the former group.

They are: —

(i) *Svabhāvokti*,
(ii) *Bhāvika*, and
(iii) *Rasavadādi*.

The beauty of these does not derive from the structure of imagery etc., but inheres in the very texture of poetry. These represent the very stuff of poetry, and their analysis would amount to an account of the poet's vision to be embodied in the artistic form. Everything is grist to the poet's mill, and non-human objects, both animate and inanimate, of 'nature', like bird, insect and beast, wind and cloud, plant and fruit—may become quite poetic when their quintessence *(sūkṣma-svabhāva)* is distilled by the poet's penetrating vision.[4] The poetic beauty hidden in such objects is not within the reach of the insensitive—the non-poets or bad poets.[5] The extremely refined sensitivity of the poet is evidenced by *svabhāvokti*, which may be regarded as one of the three levels of poetic vision. Here, the poet's vision is turned outside himself, to the

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[4] Sūkṣmavastusvabhāvasya yathāvadvarṇanaṁ svabhāvoktiḥ—*Alaṅkārasarvasva*, TSS., p. 199.

[5] *Vide*—Jayaratha's *Vimarśinī* on the above:—kavitvamātrasya gamyaḥ kuśāgrīyadhiṣaṇatvāt. Evaṃ sthūlamatīnāṃ kavīnāṁ kukavīnāṁ tasyāvagame'pi tathā vikalpāroho na bhavediti bhāvaḥ.
—*Op. cit.* NSP., p. 223.

world of Nature; and he alone has the unique sensitivity to see into "the life of things". In its own right, such poetry is as good as any other.

The second noticeable strain in the poet's vision is *bhāvanā*. It is an intensely vivid perception of things, both past and future. The poet's insight is confined to the present, but transcends the limits of Time and Space. Its validity is not vouchsafed by its present intuitive intensity, and hence it is not a case of error or delusion or idle fancy. It is not even symbolic or hyperbolic fancy *(atiśayokti)*, since the past and the present are *not felt* by the poet as different entities. On the other hand, he is aware of a single, undivided entity. So, poetic truth is, if anything, a higher truth, a closer approximation to Reality.

Ruyyaka takes us deeper into the nature of this *bhāvanā* or poetic vision, and compares it with ordinary perception on the one hand, and Yogic perception on the other. Even ordinary perception, in his opinion, depends as much on the subject's sense organs as on the nature of the object outside.[6] In Yogic perception, however, the subjective vision itself is capable of vivid experience even without the presence of the object.[7] 'Similar is the nature of poetic vision', says Ruyyaka.[8] In what, then, do they differ? Only in the occasion that starts the activity of vision itself. In the case of a Yogin, it is the assiduous practice of Yogic discipline which culminates in *bhāvanā*, and it has no ulterior aim of communication. But a poet's

[6] Na hi pratyakṣatvaṃ kevalaṃ vastudharmaḥ; pratipattyapekṣayaiva vastuni tathābhāvāt.—*Alaṅkārasarvasva*, p. 224-5. (NSP).

[7] Yogināmatīndriyārthadarśane bhāvanārūpā. —*Loc. cit.*

[8] Kāvyārthavidāṃ ca bhāvanāsvabhāvaiva —*Loc. cit.*

bhāvanā is due to his sensitive and intense experience of the Sublime *(atyadbhuta)*.[9] Though personal in one sense, it is also an impersonal intuition in as much as the poet is not conscious of it, and that is why it is distinct from poetic fancy where the poet is conscious of his personality.[10] In other words, the poet becomes but a spontaneous medium for the expression of his intuition.

The third is indeed the highest moment of poetic vision, where the poet's personality is totally annihilated by his becoming one with his artistic emotions.[11] The poet's activity here is guided throughout by the emotional aspect of his personality, an aspect which veritably lives all the emotions it expresses. While the second element of *bhāvanā* is mainly intellectual, this element of Rasa is mainly emotional. *Bhāvanā* has its analogue in the mystic vision of the *bhinna-sarvajña*, the would-be *Siddha*, one who vividly intuits both his own seeing self and the things intuited.[12] But Rasa is like the state of the perfected Yogin

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[9] Sā ca bhāvanā vastugatyātyadbhutatvaprayuktā —*Loc. cit.*

[10] Nāpi vastugatā ivārthā utprekṣāprayojakāḥ; tasyā abhimāna-rūpāyāḥ pratipattṛdharmatvāt. —*Loc. cit.*

[11] Nāpyayaṃ puraḥsphuradrūpatayā sacamatkāraṃ pratīteḥ rasavadalaṅkāraḥ. Ratyādicittavṛttīnāṃ tadanuṣaktatayā vibhā-vādīnāmapi sādhāraṇyena hṛdayasaṃvāditayā paramādvaitajñāna-vatpratītau tasya bhāvāt. —*Op. cit.* p. 266.

[12] Jayaratha observes:- 'ata eva vidyeśvarāditulyatvaṃ'—*Vimarśinī*, p. 226. The concept appears to be taken from the Pratyabhijñā school of philosophy, where the state of *śuddhavidyā* is described as follows.—

Cf. also— Tatrādyaḥ paramādvaita-nirvibhāgarasātmakaḥ ।
Antyastu grāhyatādātmyāt na pṛthak pravibhāvyate ॥
Upāntyastatsvarūpasya grāhakaḥ paribhāvyate ॥

—*Continued Next Page.*

who is aware of the One, the Absolute, without any duality whatever; and has the relish or *ānanda* of the All in the One. While the first kind of creative vision, viz., *svabhāvokti,* is limited to the world of present objects in the world, the other kinds are unlimited in extension. What is common to all the three, however, is *'saṁvāda'*[13] or intense feeling or sensitivity. When it is of the objects in Time and Space, there is *laukika-vastu-saṁvāda* as in *svabhāvokti;* when it is of objects transcending the limits of Time and Space, we have *lokottara-vastu-saṁvāda* as in *bhāvika;* when it is of emotions in all their infinite shades, we have *cittavṛtti-saṁvāda,* as in *Rasavad* etc. Of course, Ruyyaka is aware that the boundaries of these are very thin, and, more often than not, they run into one another.[14]

VII

Ruyyaka's treatment of these three *'alaṅkāras'* opens

—*Continued from Page 238*

—Abhinavagupta, Mālinīvijayavārttika, p. 90 (Srinagar Edn.)

These two states of Yogic *samādhi* are designated *asaṃprajñāta* and *saṃprajñātā* in the Yoga system, and *nirvikalpa* and *savikalpa* in works like the *Vedāntasāra.* We find other names given to these in the *Praśastapādabhāṣya* and *Nyāya-mañjarī.*

Cf. also the 'sub specie aeternitatis' of Christian theology.

[13] The word 'saṃvāda' is deliberately used, to cover the critic's state of mind as well as the poet's. The poet and the critic are alike in the moment of aesthetic delight. This is an important doctrine of the Dhvani school. Ruyyaka is adding, however, that there may be aesthetic delight even from *vastu-saṃvāda—laukika* or *lokottara*—and that it is not confined to *cittavṛtti-saṃvāda* which alone, properly speaking, is the province of *Rasa.*

[14] *Cf.* Ubhayasaṁvāda-darśane'pi samāveśo'pi ghaṭate—*Alaṅkāra-sarvasva,* p. 227.

out a vista of liteeary criticism which is both original and penetrating. These are not just 'figures' of speech like the other ones, confined to individual parts of a poem, but are the very life-principles of poems as wholes. That is why they are treated separately and exclusively at the end of his discussion of the other '*alaṅkāras*.' In Ruyyaka's analysis we have hints and echoes of the dynamic critical theories of the Old School, in the light of the New School. If one were to think that the Old School in Indian Poetics was static and stopped developing after Rudraṭa, Ruyyaka's observations, like those of Kuntaka, would prove the unsoundness of such a view and would supply the necessary corrective. Ruyyaka's conservatism (*cirantana-matānusṛti*)[15] was not blind, but based on 'transvaluation of values'. Poetry now becomes, in the words of an English poet, a

moment's monument,
Memorial from the soul's eternity
To one dead, deathless hour.

Ruyyaka's standpoint will serve to reinstate the claims of Nature Poetry and Epic Poetry to be regarded on a par with Lyric Poetry. An exclusive adherence to the Dhvani school will perhaps lead to an undervaluation of the first two and to an overestimation of the last, or at least to a laboured stretching of the first two to meet the procrustean demands of Dhvani.

The only criticism that we might bring against Ruyyaka is his use of old, outworn names even while expounding new thoughts. But this charge of new wine in old bottles is true of him as of many others in the history of Indian aesthetics.

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[15] This is the concluding expression in Ruyyaka's work.

XIX

THE GOLDEN AGE OF SANSKRIT DRAMA

Presumably, the Sanskrit drama is older than even Greek drama. By the beginning of the Christian era we find it already in full flower as a major form of literature and a popular medium of public entertainment in India. We know from the *Nāṭyaśāstra* that it included ten kinds of plays and was very rich in theory and possibly richer in practice. When we read the detailed rules of Bharata about plot and character, with divisions and subdivisions of each, about dramatic sentiments and moods, style and performance, dance and music, stage and costume, we realize how vast must have been the range of plays that formed the subjects of these rules. But unfortunately all that vast body of literature is extinct; and in their stead we have now nothing more than a few surmises of scholars engaged in laborious research. The earliest plays appear to have been staged during sacrificial sessions and public fairs in the then spoken language of the *élite,* namely, Sanskrit, with due margin allowed to low characters to speak the different dialects of Prakrit. Besides the palpable priestly and popular influences which were quite indigenous, a third was perhaps the influence of Greece at a later stage. The comic *vidūṣaka* typifies the ridiculous priest and survives in later drama; the courtly atmosphere is evident in the *entourage* of princes and princesses; while the popular love of sensation is instanced in the villain of the heroic play.

The unique characteristics of early Sanskrit drama have to be deduced from theory alone. To provide entertainment, along with instruction, was the declared

object of the playwright. To achieve the former he utilized themes of love and laughter; to ensure the latter he indulged in social satire or brought heroes, inspired by ethical ideals, in sharp contrast to rivals lacking in moral sense. A dramatic theme was hence either romantic or heroic (as in the *nāṭakas and bhāṇas*), or satirical or farcical (as in *prakaraṇas* and *prahasanas*). Since unity of emotional appeal (*Rasa*) was understood to be secured best only in the midst of variety, a large number of emotional moods had their contributory place in every play. Songs and verses in different metres formed an essential feature Sanskrit drama. Most of the significant dialogues were in verse; and verse was used with advantage to depict emotion as well as the different shades of Nature's setting.

Ancient references to the earliest plays like *Kaṁsavadha*, *Balibandha*, *Amṛtamanthana* and *Lakṣmīsvayaṁvara* indicate that the old plays mainly treated of the loves and lives of gods and legendary heroes. The canon of poetic justice was scrupulously observed and a wonderful turn of events resulting in a happy conclusion was an invariable feature of every play. A tragic close was unthinkable because the ideal divine or semi-divine hero could never fail. Any miracle was normal in such plays. While common life abounded in tragedy, drama reminded men that, in the divine order, good always prevailed over evil. It was this dramatic principle which was responsible for the absence of tragedies in Sanskrit drama. In Indian mythology, unlike that of Greece, gods never take sides with humans or fight with each other. The conflict in the early Sanskrit plays is usually between representatives of unmixed good and undiluted evil.

Such were the beginnings of Sanskrit drama, which reached its zenith in the golden age of Indian history that followed. In the hands of masters like Bhāsa and Śūdraka, Kālidāsa and Bhavabhūti, the drama gained in variety as well as intensity. The gaping gulf between the human world and the world of gods was bridged; the typical characters were more and more humanized and individualized; and poetry became an instrument more effective than ever before. All these dramatists of the golden age (c. 300-650 A.D.) were poets of the first order and were deeply influenced by Vālmīki's sweet epic style. There is in fact a conspicuous consensus of opinion among all the literary theorists—Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin (7th century), Vāmana (8th century), Ānandavardhana (9th century) and Abhinavagupta (11th century)—that drama is the best form of literature. The best in Sanskrit drama is due to the genius of these master playwrights, and they inspired the original inventive power of Viśākhadatta and Bhaṭṭa Nārāyana too. But, after the 9th century, decadence set in with imitation taking the place of invention and pedantry that of poetry. A powerful cause for the decline of interest in Sanskrit drama was also the rise of a popular theatre with sensational shows in the different spoken languages of India.

The achievement of Sanskrit drama in its heyday deserves further consideration. Like the Renaissance in Europe, the Gupta age in India was an age in which "men lived intensely, thought intensely, and wrote intensely." Passions were strong, speculation rife; and there was scope for men of genius to reach to their full stature. With broadened outlook and widening horizons of knowledge, there came an outburst of creative activity unparalleled in

the history of India. The dramatists imbibed the spirit of this age and brought the drama from divine heights to the level plains of humanity. They showed in their works a new sense of beauty and a new love of everything that made for the enrichment of life. They showed a greater spiritual nature and a deeper moral earnestness. Their characters are not just divine abstractions; they are intensely human figures. They are ancient kings and queens who lived and moved in this world; whose passions are of the world, worldly; who are softened by suffering and made to learn the lesson that Fate is stronger than man. This sentiment of pathos as the ruling sentiment in drama is the greatest contribution of our best Sanskrit dramatists. Though the framework remains the same as ever, the dramatic purpose changes outstandingly. Duṣyanta, Purūravas and Rāma, Bharata and Cārudatta, Duryodhana and Amātya Rākṣasa—all these rise to sublime statures unknown in their epic counterparts because of the dominating tragic *motif*.

The happy conclusion is sometimes more than a mere sop for the consumption of soft-livered spectators; it is an affirmation of the traditional faith in the ultimate victory of good and love over evil and hate. This tragic relief is the secret of the appeal of Bhāsa's *Svapnavāsavadatta* and *Pratimā*, Kālidāsa's *Śākuntala* and *Vikramorvaśīya*, Śūdraka's *Mṛcchakaṭika* and Bhavabhūti's *Uttararāmacarita*, Harṣa's *Nāgānanda* and Viśākhadatta's *Mudrārākṣasa*. The tragic view of life, the power of Fate over man and the chastening glow of love-in-separation mingle freely in these plays and the human interest outshines that of blood and thunder. The appeal is more to the softer sentiments than to fire and fury. Even typical romance comes only as the background

f or the ordeal of separation. The preference for pathetic themes is found already in Bhāsa, but it becomes wider and deeper in Kālidāsa and reaches its climax of intensity in Bhavabhūti. Nature in these plays is agog with life and serves almost as a character participating in the joys and woes of the heroes. Bhavabhūti's *Vāsantī* and Kālidāsa's *Kaṇvāśrama* are but two familiar examples. The theme could thus provide rich scope for the display of poetic imagery and lyric genius. Dialogues were racy and dignified; and descriptive poetry did not overstep the bounds of propriety.

Alongside the above serious play, there was the *nāṭikā* or light romantic comedy where the easy-going life of kings in their large harems was generally the subject. The erotic etiquette of a very refined class, treated in conventional fashion, and the comic relief of the jesters, magicians, etc., combined to make these plays popular at court, and we find King Harṣa himself writing two of them after the manner of Kālidāsa's *Mālavikāgnimitra*.

Social plays like the *Mṛcchakaṭika* and *Mālatīmādhava* draw their characters from common life and treat of the love-triangle with characteristic skill of dramatic construction. Here the interest in plot increases and there is ample room for realistic characterization with a genial touch of humour or harmless satire. Skill in plot-construction has reached its highest point in the historical drama—*Mudrārākṣasa*, whose appeal even today is irresistible.

We might conclude that Sanskrit drama at its best was both serious and light, imbued with the tragic spirit no less than the comic, and for the most part partaking of epic grandeur. It was intensely poetic and richly coloured; psychological conflict had come to replace the old physical

conflict of contending heroes. It had gained in width and depth at the same time. In the period of decline that followed, poetry became pedantry, drama was emptied of the breath of real life in the midst of a hundred conventions, and plays began to be written on set themes without novelty of subject or treatment. A sensitive appreciation of the splendour of Sanskrit drama may yet inspire modern writers to produce plays of permanent appeal since these classics have won encomiums from even Western critics like Göethe and Wilson. The wide appeal of *Purāṇic* plays to Indian audiences is a well-known fact even today. There are yet thousands of untapped legendary themes which may provide wings to the imagination of a creative playwright.

XX

MODERN SANSKRIT DRAMA

"Every Nation" in the words of Sir Francis Younghusband, "has a different soul which, like a violin, conserves its peculiar temper through all changes." The remark is particularly applicable to Sanskrit drama, which is still surviving as an expression of our national genius and which, with its history of 2,000 years, is a unique phenomenon in the literary history of the world.

From the earliest times Sanskrit genius successfully steered clear of the Scylla of popular taste and Charybdis of individual idiosyncrasy. While the textbook of Bharata on Dramaturgy provides detailed instructions to actors and stage-managers, it offers only suggestive hints to the playwrights. It does not lay down any rules like the Aristotelian Unities which can cabin and crib the genius of the playwright. It analyses searchingly the factors involved in all dramas in general, *viz.*, plot, characters and emotion, and brings out how everything must conduce to the last, namely *Rasa*, because the actor's art lies only in giving relief to emotions with the aid of music, dance, gesture, etc. To Bharata, then, the playwright was only a script-writer for the stage and the script was nothing more than a bare skeleton to which flesh and blood were contributed by the actors on the stage. Bharata's analysis throughout is one of simple enumeration of all logical possibilities; and it cannot cripple the imagination of the artist and limit his choice. It only enables him to be aware of the stage conventions and educates the spectators as to what they should expect from a drama.

Bharata could therefore recognize as many as twenty forms and sub-forms of drama in theory; and the variations were in point of plot or characters or *Rasa*. The plot could be legendary or invented, idealistic or realistic. Characters could be divine or semi-divine or human; high, low or middling; *Rasas* could be one of the eight or nine primary emotions of man standing out in the midst of numberless shifting moods. This is not the place for me to enter into more detail; but it should be clear that Bharata's broad theory cannot preclude any stage-production full of emotion from the province of drama. The theme may be idealistic or realistic, the vein may be light or heavy, the characters may be heroic or unheroic. Bharata held that the impression left on the mind of the spectator of a play should be one of peace and not of vexation. He also felt that poetic justice where good always triumphed against evil would implant a message of hope and optimism in the spectator and make his faith in ethics deeper. This is the very essence of Indian philosophy and Bharata is only according it a high place in his scheme of drama by banning tragedy. The theme of tragic suffering is not excluded but only a tragic close. In the development of the plot, whose very soul is a conflict of interests, the dramatist was enjoined to stick to the rule of inevitability of incidents and the element of surprise was to be reserved to the last. The conclusion of every Sanskrit play will embody a most unexpected turn in the story and even the device of *deus ex machina* is freely utilized at this stage. Since the dominant emotion was the pivot of the drama, the playwright was expected to be lyrical in his treatment of the characters and their feelings in relation to each other and Nature. Sanskrit

drama in its long and chequered history has throughout conformed to these classical rules of Bharata.

The origins of Sanskrit drama might have been religious. But we know it only after it had reached its zenith, when it had become courtly and secular. The existence of the Vidūṣaka or the court-fool in the earliest dramas we know indicates that drama was meant mainly for princely entertainment and a select audience of critics trained in the rules of Bharata. The Sanskrit stage was never popular and we are unaware of any commercial theatre which ever put a Sanskrit drama on the boards. During religious congregations or *yātrās*, they were sometimes staged by temple-theatres for the benefit of the learned few, and sometimes by courtesans in their establishments for the benefit of cultured beaus. If the performance of Sanskrit plays has survived professionally up to the present time, it is only in Kerala, where also the demands of the popular audience have so much affected the Sanskrit original that a single act of it forms the tail of a four-day entertainment in Malayalam.

Under the patronage of the court and the aristocracy, Sanskrit drama flourished in its glory till the 12th century, when the Mohammedan intrusion stifled the Sanskrit stage. The golden age could give equal impetus to social comedies like the *Mṛcchakaṭika* and melodramas like the *Mālatīmādhava*, romantic tragi-comedies like *Śākuntala* and heroic plays like *Veṇīsaṁhāra*, historical plays like the *Mudrārākṣasa* and romantic plays like *Ratnāvalī*, allegorical plays liks *Prabodhacandrodaya* and satirical farces like the *Mattavilāsaprahasana*. But all that variety became a thing of the past in the period of decline or decadence of Sanskrit drama when it was divorced gradually from

the stage. Instead of poets, pandits took to play-writing and produced works on stock epic themes in a highly conventional way. In the absence of the chastening influence of the stage, plays were intended for the learned reader only and lengthy descriptions in the set pattern abound. This decadent drama is more distant from life in setting; in character it is stereotyped and artificial, in language less close to the true workings of the human heart. The *Pratāparudrakalyāṇa* of Vidyānatha provides a patent example of this decadent taste.

Yet it lingered on under princely patronage, and even in the period after the 15th century, isolated plays by pandits in courts were being written. This final phase of Sanskrit drama represents its decay when dramatic activity itself was at its lowest ebb and when the influence of the folk-theatre made Sanskrit playwrights turn to sentimental pieces like the *Rāsa-krīḍā* of Krishna on the one hand, and the corrupt taste of the reading public encouraged on the other hand *bhāṇas* or librettos on the adventures of amorists, and *prahasanas* or farces of a very obscene or indelicate nature.

The close of this period of decay marks the birth of the modern age in Sanskrit drama. From the last quarter of the 19th century, the influence of modern ideas can be felt in Sanskrit drama to an appreciable extent, alongside of the imitations of older plays. It is an age of imitation, adaptation and experimenting in drama mostly by the class of pandits whose importance was waning and whose scholarship does not always keep step with a keen literary sense· There is indeed a vast bulk of dramatic writing which appeared in various Sanskrit periodicals and an attempt has been made recently to

give an idea of these by Dr. V. Raghavan in his article on Sanskrit literature in the volume, *Contemporary Indian Literature*, published by the Sahitya Akademi. Rummaging into the files of these old periodicals, one may hit upon a work of merit here and there; but it is like the search for a needle in a haystack. Even among the plays which have appeared in book form, the number of those that rise above mediocrity is but small and their stage-value is again open to question. It is therefore proposed here only to refer to the broad trends in modern Sanskrit drama and to confine our attention to one or two outstanding and representative works.

1. Didactic Mythological Drama

Mandikal Rama Shastrin of Mysore wrote perhaps the hundredth Sanskrit play on the popular story of Nala and Damayantī under the title *Bhaimīpariṇaya* (1914). In his English Introduction to this play, Karpur Shrinivasrao makes out a good case for such imitative works:

"The aim of all good literature is to serve as a silent, and yet very effective teacher of mankind. Such teaching can only be possible through the delineation of well-known characters, who can be taken as so many types of humanity. Our great popular heroes easily lend themselves to serve as models to mankind for all ages and times."

This reflects the traditional taste of the time, and we have on the same theme full-length plays like *Anarghanala-caritra* (Bombay, 1908) by Sudarshanacharya Panjabi and *Naladamayantīyaṁ* (Calcutta, 1926) by Kalipada Tarkacharya in the other parts of India. On the theme of Rama's banishment of Sita, Chhubi Lal Soori wrote his *Kuśalavodaya* (Bombay, 1897) "under orders of H. E. Bheemshumshere Jung R. B., Commanding General of Nepal Army." The

only feature worth noticing about these plays is their increasing avoidance of Prakrit varieties and Shri Panjabi has used Hindi itself for all the speeches of the lower characters. These plays do not gain in comparison with the classics of old.

2. IMITATIONS OF BHĀṆAS AND PRAHASANAS

Under this class come works like *Viṭarājavijaya* (Trichur) by Koccunni Raja and *Rasārṇavataraṅgabhāṇa* (Chittur, 1925) by K. Krishnamacharya of Tirupati. These one-act librettos are hardly appealing to modern taste and Krishnamacharya's fears stated in his preface are only confirmed by the passage of time. He says:—

"However ugly or feeble one's child, one does not generally wish it dead, before it can try its own chances in the world. If, however, it should die, in spite of facilities offered to this end, it shall at least have the consolation of a decent burial".

In point of morbid indecency wearing the mask of poetry, perhaps there can be nothing equal to *Holāmahotsava* by one Krishnarama Vyas of Banaras in the history of world literature. The farce *Hāsyārṇava* by Jagadisha Tarkalankara (Amarbharati, 1944), betrays again a bad taste. Y. Mahalinga Sastri's *Kauṇḍinya Prahasana* shows a better taste but is too trivial. Under this class, we cannot boast of any degree of achievement.

3. COURT-COMEDIES OR IMAGINATIVE PLAYS

We find a new genius and a new dramatic art in the plays of Mahakavi Ambikadatta Vyas of Mithila. His play *Sāmavatam̐* (2nd ed. 1947, Banaras) combines the merit of Bāṇa's manner and romantic theme with Srīharṣa's skill and scholasticism. Its theme is an extravaganza where an ascetic youth turns into a maid owing to Durvāsa's curse

and is married to his classmate. The scholar's experiences in the city during Holi revelries and his comic test at court, his romantic approaches as maid and Durgā's appearance at the close, only to confirm his changed sex, are all improbable no doubt; but this very improbability adds to the literary quality of the piece and makes it an original contribution to Sanskrit drama. There is not a word of dialogue or a line of poetry without the poetic touch and the author's skill, in turning out quips and quibbles and in packing words with musical assonances almost artlessly, is bound to appeal to the most fastidious classical taste. Such original works reveal the live force of Sanskrit drama as a pure literary form and give us hope for the future. Creative writing in Sanskrit is still possible provided such genius is recognized and rewarded. The number of such plays is very small in the modern age in view of the absence of court patronage. *Prasannakaśyapīya* (Mysore, 1951) by Jaggu Venkatacharya, which treats of the later history of Śakuntalā, deserves mention in this connection. *Prema-vijaya* (Madras, 1939) by Sundaresha Sharma is an interesting play in seven acts. It treats of the love of princess Candralekhā for the court-poet's son Kalādhara, the difficulties in the way of their marriage and a happy close thanks to the military exploits of the hero. The influence of Kālidāsa's *Mālavikāgnimitra* on the author is evident throughout.

4. Historical Plays

Sanskrit drama has broken new ground in this held by focusing attention on Indian patriotism and valour whose inveterate enemies have been disunity and treachery in Indian history. MM. Haridas Siddhantavagisha's *Vangīya-pratāpa* (Calcutta) is a powerful play which makes us

re-live the troubled times of Muslim oppression, and the successful attempt, though short-lived, of King Pratapa Roy to bring peace to Bengal by overthrowing the yoke of the Nawab and the Moghuls. In its appeal to the spirit of Indian patriotism it reminds us of Shakespeare's *Henry V*. The same author has also given us an equally stirring and arresting play on *Mevārapratāpaṁ* (Calcutta, 1950), which deals with the heroic stand of the Rajputs against the onslaught of the Moghuls. On the same theme we have another drama, *Vīrapratāpanāṭaka* (Lahore, 1937) by Mathura Prasad Dikshit. Mention must also be made of two plays on historical themes written by Shri Mula Sankar Yajnik. His *Saṁyogitāsvayaṁvara* (Baroda, 1929) relates to the chivalrous story of Prithviraj marrying the daughter of Jayacandra of Kanauj. The heroic career of Shivaji is the subject of his second play, *Chhatrapatisāmrājyaṁ* (Baroda, 1929).

5. Social Comedies

It is under this head that most of the modern experiments in Sanskrit drama deserve to be placed. Not only learned pandits, but lawyers, doctors and other public men have tried their hand at this dramatic form and as a consequence it is less pedantic than any of the other varieties noticed above. *Āryadeśasudhāraṇaṁ* (Bombay, 1889) by a teacher, Vinayaka Bhat, is called a *mahānāṭaka* but is in the narrative manner of the epics; and even divisions into scenes and acts are absent. There is neither action nor dialogue which is conspicuous. What we have is an allegory. India is supposed to be married to a lady called Reform; and they give birth to eight children—three sons and five daughters. The sons are named Patriotism, Perseverance and Treasure. The daughters are Righteousness, Loyalty, Academy of

Knowledge, Academy of Work and Academy of Arts. The mother has a brother, Divine Favour, who preaches the need for education and for the eradication of social evils. The thing appears today a complete failure, neither fish nor flesh.

Saṅkaravivāhanāṭaka (Bombay, 1934) by Dr. V. M. Kulkarni is also written mostly in *anuṣṭubh ślokas* with occasional mixtures of prose. As stated in the Introduction, "its main object is to condemn the drink habit and the custom of excommunicating the bride and the bridegroom of mixed marriages." The whole drama moves in a modern setting. The dispensary of Dr. Bhagirathi is the scene of most of the action. She has divorced her first husband and remarried outside her caste. Pleader Godbole supports her forward views; and her daughter's falling in love with a classmate not of her caste presents a problem to the mother who is educating her for a medical career and who has fixed her marriage with a prince. There are thus two variations of the same theme deftly handled and we have rollicking comedy in one Khan Bahadur who bites the lady doctor's cheek in a drunken fit and is made to pay Rs. 10,000 as damages by the cunning pleader. The bridegroom's parents refuse to recognize the love-marriage, which leads to an attempt at suicide on the part of the loving couple. The tragedy is averted at the close by the wise priest who consents to convert the girl into the caste of the bridegroom. This five-act play is modern in technique and ideas, racy in style and lively in atmosphere. It shows how Sanskrit can be handled to suit modern conditions and to secure a wide appeal.

Parivartanaṁ (Banaras, 1956) is a fine five-act play by Shri Kapiladeva Dvivedi, Retired from Government Service.

It deals with the social evil of the dowry system and the inadequacy of law courts to mete out justice. The hero of the play, who is forced to sell and pledge away his parental property to get his daughter married, suffers untold misery first at the hands of the unscrupulous creditor and next at the hands of the helpless judge. His miseries are at an end thanks to the decree of the State after Independence that all local cases must be tried by the village *panchayats*. The directness and simplicity of the author's Sanskrit makes it eminently readable.

6. Political Plays

The political struggle of the modern age has also left an indelible impress on the Sanskrit drama and at least one *pandit's* imagination was fired to produce a very spirited Sanskrit play which echoes the spirit of the time. The *Bhārata-vijaya-nāṭaka* (3rd Edition, 1952, Banaras) by Mathuraprasad Dikshit presents the pageant of Indian history from the days of Clive up to modern times in striking colours. The Britisher is the villain of the piece and all the evil done by him is movingly, if exaggeratedly, brought out in symbolic fashion. Mother India is presented as an old lady bound in fetters. Each fighter for freedom loosens her fetters while each representative of British rule tightens their hold on her. The drama ends with the change of heart of the Britisher, who quits India, placing the power in the hands of Gandhiji. The play was written in 1937 by the Pandit at the court of the Baghat Prince and the Ms. was confiscated by the State private secretary as seditious. It could be published only when the playwright's prophecy had come true. In patriotic fervour the drama remains unequalled and it deserves a high rank as literature by the irresistible power of its poetry. It is

throughout one-sided in its presentation, but this may not be mentioned as a defect in an admittedly propagandist piece. *Vāṇīvilāsam* (Banaras) by Vindhyeshwari Prasad Shastri is another short one-act play which mirrors the woes of India in bondage and closes with a plea for the revival of ancient Indian culture. The *Satyagraha* movement is beautifully mirrored in Panditā Kshama Rao's *Kaṭuvipāka* and other playlets. *Kashmīra-sandhāna-samudyama* (Bangalore, 1954) attempts to sketch the Kashmir problem in dramatic form. Leaders like Dr. Khare, S. P. Mukherjee, Jawaharlal Nehru, Liaqat Ali Khan and Sheikh Abdulla come as characters here and they are made to talk the highly impassioned language of epic heroes. Their arguments too are incredibly simple and the play only serves to illustrate that the conventional graces of Sanskrit drama are misplaced in sketching the contemporary political scene.

7. Religious and Philosophical Plays

Under this category come numerous productions written by religious heads of Maths and their *protégés*. Their literary value is not always commensurate with their religious importance. Mathura Prasad Dikshit's *Śaṅkara vijayanāṭaka* (Banaras, 1953) is a play of pure intellectual ideas. The great teacher's successful debates with materialists, Buddhists and so forth are re-enacted before us. By treating the incidents of human interest in Śaṅkara's career, the play could have been made more appealing. The conflict of modern ideas with religious practices is humorously and finely sketched in *Samañjasasanātanaṁ* (Srirangam, 1940) by Rajagopalacharya.

8. Translations

As Dr. Raghavan has noted, Shakespeare's plays like *A Comedy of Errors, A Midsummer Night's Dream* and

As you Like It have been rendered into Sanskrit by writers like Rajaraja Varma and R. Krishnamacharya. A perusal of these will show that they are all more or less adaptations and Sanskrit has not yet forged an effective equivalent to English blank verse. The poetic force of Shakespeare has not flowed into the translations.

Dr. R. Shama Shastri of Mysore realized these difficulties of translating Shakespeare and turned his talents to the task of translating the prose tragedy of Emilia Gallotte by Lessing, the German playwright. He has achieved a measure of success in his translation though the foreign atmosphere may leave the Indian reader cold.

Shri S. N. Tadpatrikar's *Viśvamohanam* (Poona, 1949) is only a free Sanskrit adoption of the first part of Goethe's *Faust*. It conforms to the conventions of Sanskrit drama and reads like an original. But there is not even a glimmer of Goethe's genius in the Sanskrit piece.

In conclusion, it might be stated that though the modern age has produced no masterpiece in Sanskrit drama, its achievement is neither negligible nor disheartening. Sanskrit drama has certainly gained in length and breadth, thanks to the various experiments, and the Sanskrit language has been made to come out of the old palace and walk the streets of common humanity without losing its essential majesty and dignity. What we lack is depth, depth of psychological insight. Characterization is not the strong point of modern Sanskrit drama and, in the hands of imaginative playwrights, Sanskrit poetic drama may yet reach heights unequalled before. There is room for hope because Sanskrit is again attracting today the

best minds of the country as in its golden period and its study is open to one and all instead of being confined to a small coterie. Sentimentality and sophistication are fast disappearing and giving place to a balanced outlook on life, and a fuller understanding of reality. The words of T. E. Hulme describing the sunset are somewhat applicable to the Sanskrit Muse, who is like

> A coryphée covetous of applause
> Loth to leave the stage
> With final diablerie, poises high her toe
> Displays scarlet lingerie of carmin'd clouds
> Amid the hostile murmur of the stalls.

But the stall-eyed view is only one view. As a pure literary form, Sanskrit drama has greater claims for recognition than many of the commercial successes on the Indian stage today.

XXI

A NEW PLAY BY AŚVAGHOṢA?

I

It is well-known that many a Buddhist classic in Sanskrit has been irrevocably lost in the land of its origin, and that some of the texts are being reconstructed by patient Indologists of the present century from old Tibetan and Chinese translations. Outstanding works like Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika* are seeing the light of day only in recent times.

What is true of Buddhist texts is true, in a larger measure, of Jaina classics in Sanskrit. Jaina philosophical and literary classics have not attracted the attention of Oriental scholars abroad to the same extent as Buddhist texts; and it is only in the last two decades that some Jain Institutes like the Bhāratīya Jñāna Pīṭha (Kāśī) have been bringing out some valuable works like the commentary of Vādirājasūri on Akalaṅka's *Nyāya-viniścaya*.[1] As Dr. Satkari Mookerjee observes in his learned Foreword to the second volume of this work (*viz. Nyāya-viniścaya-vivaraṇa*):—"Bhaṭṭa Akalaṅka is an author of stupendous scholarship and superordinary insight.... The commentary of Vādirājasūri on the *Nyāya-viniścaya* seems to me the most elaborate, exhaustive and comprehensive of all.... The value of this work is particularly augmented by the elaborate criticism of Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika* and the exposition of Prajñākaragupta."

[1] Published in two volumes; Vol. I-1949; Vol. II-1954. Edited by Prof. Mahendrakumar Jain. Bhāratīya Jñānapīṭha, Kāśī, Nos. 3 and 12.

II

The present writer had occasion to consult this work of Vādirājasūri, a Digambara Jaina *guru*, in connection with his introduction to the critical edition of the *Yaśodharacarita*, a poem in four cantos by the same author (published by the Karnatak University, 1963) who held the significant titles of '*Syādvādavidyāpati*' ("Master of Jaina Thought"), '*Ṣaṭ-tarka-ṣaṇmukha*' (The Six-faced God of Six Philosophical Systems") and '*Jagadekamalla-vādi*' ("Master Dialectician in the court of the Later Cālukya king Jayasiṁha *alias* Jagadekamalla (1015-1042 A.D.). Eulogies of this Vādirāja appear in a number of inscriptions in Karṇāṭaka,[2] including the famous Malliṣeṇa's Epitaph at Śravaṇabeḷagoḷa;[3] and one of his poems, *viz.*, the *Pārśvanāthacarita* is dated 1025 A.D.[4] Vādirāja is always glorified as a formidable dialectician and a master-poet, a veritable terror to disputants of rival schools.

III

It is not the purpose of this note to give an idea of the polemical acumen of Vādirāja's *locus classicus*, or an exposition of his pointed *critique* of Dharmakīrti's

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[2] Cf. *Epigraphia Carnatica*, Vol. VIII, Nagar 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 44; Belur 117; Shimoga, Pt. I, No: 126; Vol. XI, No: 90; *Mysore Archaeological Report*, 1926, p. 49, etc.

[3] Cf. verse 40 (loc. cit.) of this epitaph (translated by Hultzsch in the Ep. Indica, Vol. III. p. 184ff.):—

"A speech which illumined the three worlds has issued only from two persons on this earth; one was the king of Jinas (Jinarāja), the other Vādirāja."

[4] Published in the M. D. J. Granthamala, Bombay. 1917.

system of thought. All that is intended is to draw the attention of scholars to a stray reference *in extenso* which appears in this work to a lost play of Aśvaghoṣa, *viz.*, "*Rāṣṭrapāla*"; perhaps an only reference which has been preserved in literary tradition, and most valuable in so far as the reference is contained in the actual words of Dharmakīrti himself in the course of his exposition of 'the rules of philosophical debate' in the treatise "*Vāda-nyāya*".[5]

Akalaṅka, the author of the text of the *Nyāya-viniścaya*, is himself criticising the views of Dharmakīrti; and the two authors are not later than the eighth century A.D. Perhaps Dharmakīrti was at least a century earlier. Thus the tradition recorded by Dharmakīrti, himself a great Buddhist thinker, about Aśvaghoṣa's authorship of a play, becomes reliable and deserves the attention of scholars.

IV

A word about the context in which the passage appears may not be out of place here. Akalaṅka, and after him, Vādirāja are discussing the nature of *nigrahasthānas* or vulnerable points in argumentation

[5] The editor of *Nyāyaviniścayavivaraṇa* has noted some parallel passages in Dharmakīrti's *Vādanyāya*, p. 65ff. (published by the Mahabodhi Society, Sarnath). The present writer could not get a copy of this edition to check up whether the passage in question is substantially found therein. But judging on the basis of other passages from *Vādanyāya* quoted *in extenso* by the editor in this context, it can be concluded that the exact wording of Dharmakīrti's alternate explanations of *nigrahasthānas* (vulnerable points in argumentation) is preserved here and not in the published work.

which will decide the victory or defeat of the contestants in a philosophical debate (*kathā*).[6] Dharmakīrti appears to have severely criticised the Jaina *anekāntavāda*; and the Jaina logicians like Akalaṅka are naturaly joining issues with him on the very fundamentals of procedure.[7]

According to the Jaina logicians, what really clinches the issue in a philosophical debate is the *establishment* of the one or the other of the theses. The defective or irrelevant arguments advanced by either party cannot be deemed decisive. Though they may serve to break up a particular debate (*kathā-viccheda*), they cannot conclusivly prove the strength of one view as against the other (*kathā-siddhi*); and are, therefore, indecisive. A true *nigrahasthāna* should establish the soundness of either the one or the other of the rival positions of the two disputants.

In this context, Vādirāja quotes in his commentary parallel passages from Akalaṅka's *Siddhiviniścaya* and proceeds to review some of the alternate explanations

[6] According to the Nyāya system, which first makes use of this technical term, the judges will pronounce their verdict regarding the victory of one of the debators when they come across 'the vulnerable points' in debates occasioning the undesirable and taking either of these two forms:—(i) Silencing the opponent and preventing him from holding forth any further; (ii) Making the opponent accept a position contrary to the one he holds. The Nyāya has classified 22 *nigrahasthānas*.

[7] Dharmakīrti tries to explain them all under the two broad heads of *asādhanāṅgavacana* on the part of the proponent (*vādin*) and of *adoṣodbhāvana* on the part of the opponent (*prativādin*). While no one can dispute this broad division, Dharmakīrti also appears to have tried to bring in other forms of irrelevant or weak arguments under these. This is objected to by the Jain logicians.

proposed by Dharmakīrti on his own view of *nigraha-sthānas*.[8]

V

The following is the citation:—

परमप्यत्र व्याख्यानम्—"संशयादिरहितत्वेन प्रतिपत्तव्यं साधनं कर्मस्थे भावे प्रत्ययविधानात्, तदङ्गं स्वरूपं यस्य तत्साधनाङ्गं विवादापन्नं साध्यमेव, तस्मादन्यदसाधनाङ्गं, तस्य वचनम् । तद्यथा—

'आत्मनि विवादे नास्त्यात्मेति वयं बौद्धाः ।'

'के बौद्धाः? '

'ये बुद्धशासनमुपगताः ।'

'को बुद्धः? '

'यस्स शासने भदन्ताश्वघोषः प्रव्रजितः ।'

'कः पुनर्भदन्ताश्वघोषः ? '

'यस्य राष्ट्रपालं नाम नाटकम् ।'

'कीदृशं च तन्नाटकम् ? '

इति प्रसङ्गमारचय्य 'नान्द्यन्ते ततः प्रविशति सूत्रधार इत्यारभ्य पठति नृत्यति गायति च, अपरस्य व्यामोहमनुवादे शक्तिव्याघातं च कर्तुमिति, तदपि वादिनो निग्रहस्थानमप्रस्तुताभिधानात् ।'

"A valid reason is only that which is free from doubt, etc.; for the grammatical termination here (in the word *sādhana*) indicates its adequacy to prove the thesis. (Taking it as *Bahuvrīhi*) that which is of the nature of sādhana comes to be called *sādhanāṅga* viz, the disputed thesis itself. And whatever is other than that is *asādhanāṅga* (or irrelevant). And a mention of the irrelevant is a vulnerable point of the proponent as in the following example:—

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[8] *Nyāya-viniścaya-vivaraṇa*, Vol. II, p. 239. Vādirāja has not explicitly stated here that the words are Dharmakīrti's' but the context, as indicated by the learned editor, leaves little room for doubt.

'When the existence of the soul (*ātman*) is under dispute, we, Buddhists, hold the thesis that there is no soul.'

'Who are the Buddhists?'

'Those who accept the teachings of the Buddha.'

'Who, then, is the Buddha?'

'The Buddha is he as a result of whose teaching, the Bhadanta Aśvaghoṣa renounced the world.'

'Who is Bhadanta Aśvagoṣa?'

'He is the author of the play "*Rāṣṭrapāla*."'[9]

'What is the nature of that play?'

Building up a context like this, one might start reading, dancing, and singing the whole play, right from the first sentence:

'Enter the Stage-manager after the close of Invocation (*nāndi*)'[10] and cause utter confusion to the rival and make it impossible for him to quote anything exactly.

But since it is all an irrelevant digression, it should be deemed as a vulnerable point in the arguing proponent (indicating his defeat)."[11]

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[9] Variant readings noted by the editor are '*svarāṣṭrapālanaṁ*' and '*surāṣṭrapālanaṁ*'.

[10] It is interesting to observe that this same opening sentence is deemed by Bhāsa scholars to be a peculiarity of Bhāsa's dramatic technique.

[11] Vādirāja comments on this that the view is not acceptable because such an irrelevant series of digressions (*prasaṅga-paramparā*) might lead only to a break up of the debate (*kathā-viccheda*) but not to the defeat of the Buddhist proponent (*na parājayasya*). Real defeat of the one is consequent upon the other's establishing a counter-thesis; and in this case no such thing has happened.

VI

A few things clearly follow from the above quotation, which are of scholarly interest:—

(i) Aśvaghoṣa, the Buddhist monk, was a famous playwright and the name of one of his plays was "*Rāṣṭrapāla*."

(ii) Aśvagoṣa's dramas were being recited, sung, and danced (*i.e.*, staged) by Buddhists, (possibly because these were religious and philosophical plays).

(iii) At least one play "*Rāṣṭrapāla*" began with the words: *nāndyante tataḥ praviśati sūtradhāraḥ*, like the plays ascribed to Bhāsa.

It was the German savant Lüders that published fragments of Aśvagoṣa's plays from the 'Turfan Manuscripts."[12] The title of one of them was read as *Sāriputraprakaraṇa* but those of others could not be decided. Frôm the published fragments, it is not clear whether any of them are parts of "*Rāṣṭrapāla*," the play mentioned by Dharmakīrti, as quoted by Vādirāja. In the present state of our knowledge, it is difficult to say anything more about the lost play. One may, at the most, hazard the guess that it was perhaps a religious or morality play like the fragments recovered in part. Possibly, scholars in Tibetan and Chinese may be able to throw some light on this work of Aśvaghoṣa if they come across references to Rāṣṭrapāla."

[12] Lüders, Brüchstucke Buddhistischer Dramen, Berlin, 1911; Das Sāriputraprakaraṇa, ein Drama des Aśvaghoṣa, SBAW, 1911 and 1912.

Addendum

Since writing the above, the present writer has come across some earlier studies bearing on this question, which deserve to be recorded here:—

1. Sylvain Levi has collected all references to the story of Rāṣṭrapāla in the Chinese version of the Tripiṭaka in his article, 'Encore Aśvaghoṣa in the *Journal Asiatique*, 1928 (p. 193f). It emerges that Rāṣṭrapāla is the name of the hero of the play since the story may reasonably be taken as identical with the story in the *Raṭṭhapāla-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*.
2. Vidhusekhara Bhattacharya has succeeded in tracing the quotation from Dharmakīrti (referring to (*Rāṭṣapāla-nāṭaka*) to the source, viz., *Vāda-nyāya* in an article, 'A new drama of Aśvaghoṣa published in the *Journal of the Greater India Society*, Vol. V (p. 15f).
3. Dr. Bagchi has drawn the attention of scholars to this very passage quoted also in Cakradhara's *Nyāya-mañjarī-granthi-bhaṅga*, a work on Buddhist logic, noticed in the *Jessalmere Catalogue* (Gaekwad Oriental Series, No. XXI, p. 40) with the reading *Rājyapāla* in the place of *Rāṣṭrapāla*. He has also added a reference to it in the Chinese translation (472 A.D.) of *Dharmapiṭaka-nidāna* in his article, 'The Rāṣṭrapālanāṭaka of Aśvaghoṣa' in the Sardesai Commemoration Volume (pp. 261-263)
4. A reference to the play in Jain canonical sources is indicated by Prof. Sekhar in his recent book on Sanskrit Drama.

XXII

THE MESSAGE OF THE SANSKRIT EPICS

—An Early Estimate by Ānandavardhana

If we try to understand the true national genius of India in the past and the rich legacy of culture and traditions handed down to us through the centuries, we naturally turn to the two outstanding epics—Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata—for inspiration and edification. But at the very outset we will find that the two epics are unlike each other. While the Rāmāyaṇa transports us into a region of pure poetry, the Mahābhārata stuns us with its encyclopaedic proportions and variety of themes. It defies, as it were, all attempts at determining the essential undercurrent of thought that permeates the entire work.

But even as early as the 9th century A.D., Ānandavardhana, a literary critic of Kashmir, tried to discover the central thread running in the works of Vālmīki and Vyāsa. His main conclusions embodied in his celebrated work, the *Dhvanyāloka*, are original and brilliant and of more than a passing interest even to a modern student of the epics. In what follows, an attempt is made to summarise Ānandavardhana's observations on the two national epics of India.

Vālmīki and Vyāsa may be characterised as the two greatest poet-sages India produced. Of these, as regards Vālmīki, there are no two opinions that he is first and foremost a poet, that in fact, he is the *ādi-kavi*, the father of the poetic tradition in India. His epic is a *mahākāvya* as also the *ādikāvya*. Therefore the Rāmāyaṇa deserves to be estimated only by literary standards. But Vyāsa is not on the same footing as Vālmīki. His work is more than a uniform epic *(kāvyā)*; it is a systematic exposition of scriptural

truths *(śāstra)*. Not only is tradition quite emphatic on this point, but he who runs may read. Hence the criteria of literary estimate that would serve to explain the greatness of the Rāmāyaṇa cannot adequately explain the greatness of the Mahābhārata, when taken in themselves. They must be supplemented by other criteria but in such a way that they will not conflict with the conclusions arrived at on the basis of literary criteria. It is in drawing this happy synthesis between the two conclusions that Ānandavardhana's greatness lies.

Now what are the substantial literary criteria that one would resort to in evaluating any poem *(kāvya) par excellence?* According to Ānandavardhana, considerations of metre and music and even imagery *(alaṅkāra)* are purely extrinsic. The intrinsic factors are *Rasa* and *Dhvani*. The former is the name given to poetic content while the latter indicates the suggestive manner in which feelings and emotions are aroused in the reader. In other words, the aesthetic emotions in a poem are far more pivotal than tricks of style and glitter of ornament.

The secret of the appeal of a poem of magnitude *(mahākāvya)* consists in the clever infusion of the various *rasas* by the poet in a suggestive way; but lest the fundamental unity of the poem be impaired, it is necessary that a single *rasa* or sentiment should be made dominant throughout. Now nebulous and hazy, now outshone by another *rasa*, yet standing out pre-eminently at all significant points in the poem—such is the nature of the dominant sentiment *(aṅgi-rasa)*. A clever critic should be able to trace its existence from the outset right up to the close of a *mahākāvya*. This then is the key to the secret of a successful poem according to Ānandavardhana.

Applying this formula to the Rāmāyaṇa we find that pathos (*karuṇa-rasa*) is the ruling sentiment. From the moment of Vālmīki's sorrow at the sight of the shrieking curlew (*krauñca*) when its mate is killed by the hunter's arrow, we can discover this *karuṇa-rasa* constantly in the Rāmāyaṇa; now in the pathetic lamentations of the blind parents whose only son and support has been shot dead by Daśaratha, now in the old King's grief at the unavoidable exile of his fond son, now in the sobs of the queens at his sad demise, now in the pitiful cries of Sītā as she is helplessly carried away by Rāvaṇa, now in the dying groans of Jaṭāyu, now in the pangs of Rāma torn by separation, and finally in the untold suffering of Sītā discarded by her husband to the mercies of the wild. Such is the steady and even flow of pathos or *karuṇa-rasa* in Vālmīki's great epic.

What about the Mahābhārata? The critic cannot as easily pronounce his literary judgment. His task is more difficult here than in the case of the Rāmāyaṇa because of the gigantic dimensions of the epic. But even so, Ānandavardhana tackles the problem boldly and his remarks are very illuminating. At the outset he draws our attention to the fact that the Mahābhārata embodies heterogeneous elements, that it is both a *śāstra* and a *kāvya* rolled into one. Nevertheless he seeks to apply the canons of literary criticism explained above and his conclusion is that in the Mahābhārata also the closing note might serve as an indicator of the sentiment intended by the poet as dominant throughout the work.

The Mahābhārata, as we all know, ends in a note of despair, all the victors too meeting their end as victims of fate ultimately. The great Pāṇḍava and Vṛṣṇi heroes of the cataclysmal war themselves die in ignoble circumstances.

Not even Krishna can escape his doom. Bhīma's gigantic strength and Arjuna's unmatched valour, Yudhiṣṭhira's righteous conduct and Krishna's divine diplomacy—all turn out to be as much a waste as Duryodhana's determined resistance with such redoubtable warriors as Bhīṣma and Droṇa, Karṇa and Aśvatthāman, fighting on his side.

It is of course easy to dismiss the whole thing with the remark that in a conflict between right and wrong, between good and evil, the side of the right and the good does emerge triumphant according to Indian ideas. But a little more reflection will show that neither of the parties who take part in the fight is wholly wrong. If Arjuna is a great hero, does not Karṇa at least on the other side lay claims to an equal, if not greater, greatness? Karṇa in his own way reaches to towering heights of self-sacrifice and grandeur, and there is hardly a foible in his majestic and imposing personality. Is not Bhīṣma, the old lion-like warrior, also a saint, an embodiment of truth and wisdom? Does not Droṇa, the teacher, elicit profound respect from Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas alike in respect of his learning and age? Were the means adopted by the Pāṇḍavas in killing these saintly heroes wholly just? If we say that Abhimanyu was unjustly killed, did the Pāṇḍavas also not pay it back in the same coin a thousandfold? In the material plane, again, how far do Krishna's actions merit the term just, whatever their mysterious implications may be in the spiritual altitudes?

Even if we suppose that the beastly insult to Draupadī at the hands of the Kauravas and their persistent refusal to share the kingdom with their brethren accounts adequately for all the retribution that followed, how are we to account for a similar fate that overtook even the

Pāṇḍavas? Did not Draupadī herself lose all her children? Such, in short, are some of the insoluble problems that confront us as we complete a reading of the Mahābhārata. The problem of fate and freewill, the problem of good and evil, the problem of justice and injustice, and a host of other perplexing dichotomies are posed prominently throughout the Mahābhārata.

Now the question is whether Vyāsa is contented with posing these problems without bothering about their solution. It is Ānandavardhana's firm conviction that Vyāsa has also indicated unmistakable solutions to these problems, and our estimate of Vyāsa is bound to be defective so long as we do not take pains to discover the solutions proposed. These solutions are sometimes indicated after the manner of *śāstra* but most often they are brought out poetically. It should be our endeavour to take note of both and to see their essential identity.

Ānandavardhana thinks that the final note of the Mahābhārata is an unmistakable pointer as to the intention of Vyāsa, which is to emphasise the need for cultivating a sense of detachment towards worldly pleasures. However promising they may look in the beginning, they are bound to land one in an abyss of despair in the long run. When the greatest heroes could not escape their inevitable doom, how much more true this must be in the case of ordinary men! To get over the inevitable doom, there is only one succour, and that is in following the path of *mokṣa* or supreme Beatitude.

Such is the impression one gets finally by reading the concluding episode of the Mahābhārata. When we look upon the epic as a *śāstra*, we say that its central teaching is *mokṣa* as *parama-puruṣārtha* or ultimate value.

This has the support of all traditional commentaries on the great epic. But when we look upon it as a *kāvya*, we would state the same truth differently, and say that the dominant sentiment of the Mahābhārata is *Śānta* or tranquillity. Ānandavardhana says: 'Vyāsa deserves everyone's esteem as the foremost sage who attempted to rescue his fellowmen from the mire of ignorance by the light of his sound and steady knowledge. He has stressed this idea of the desirability of detachment in several places of his epic. To quote only one such passage:

> Just in the same proportion as worldly pursuits turn out to be unavailing, one's sense of aversion to them is engendered; there is no doubt about it.
>
> (*Śāntiparva*, CLXXIV, 4)

It might be urged by some that Vyāsa expressly claims in the Introduction or the *Anukramaṇī* that the work throws light equally on all the *puruṣārthas* and contains all the *rasas*. But this position does not go against the view held here since the other *rasas* and *puruṣārthas* only serve to set off at greater relief the importance of *Śāntarasa* and *mokṣa* as *parama-puruṣārtha*. It is interesting to note that even in the *anukramaṇī*, Vyāsa suggestively refers to the pre-eminence of Vāsudeva, the Supreme Reality. By implication, all other descriptions, the rise and fall in the fortunes of heroes, etc., are intended only to emphasise the desirability of renouncing material pleasures in favour of devotion to the Lord. The addition of the Harivaṁśa at the end of the epic also points to the same conclusion. By showing in detail the merits of devotion to the Lord, Vyāsa contrasts the solemnity and serenity of such a life with the struggle and stress of mundane life beset with foibles, failures and frustrations.

XXIII

INDIAN POETICS AND T. S. ELIOT'S THREE VOICES OF POETRY

I

Poetry has always been something of a mystery. Its appeal is as real as its nature is elusive. Why does a poet write at all? For whom does he write? What are the things that make for poetry? What are the outstanding qualities that distinguish the various literary forms? Such questions have been raised by literary critics from time immemorial and the result is a bewildering bulk of literary theory in the East as well as in the West. Occasionally, a poet steps out of his ivory tower of creation and turns the search-light of critical introspection over the creative process to make new pronouncements in the world of literary theory. The flair for novelty is universal; and it is not rare to find men of letters making claims of cent per cent originality for their views and critics holding them high on that very score. T.S. Eliot, for instance, states in one of his recent lectures entitled THE THREE VOICES OF POETRY (National Book League, 1953) that he has two aims in choosing his subject: 'One is, to avoid saying anything that I have said before; the other is, to avoid saying anything that somebody else has said before.' He is aware more than anyone else that 'these aims together are almost impossible of realisation'; but he justifies himself on the plea:—'if there is no truth that has not been discovered by our ancestors, there is also no possible error by which they have not been deceived'. The following is an attempt to show that at least a school of critics in ancient India

were not so deceived and that T.S. Eliot's ideas, whatever their originality in the history of English critical thought, have their echoes in an ancient Sanskrit text of literary criticism dating back to the ninth century A.D., viz., the *Dhvanyāloka* of Ānandavardhana.

II

Let me explain the three 'voices' of T. S. Eliot in his own words as far as possible:—'The first is the voice of the poet talking to himself or nobody. The second is the voice of the poet addressing an audience, whether large or small. The third is the voice of the poet when he attempts to create a dramatic character speaking in verse; when he is saying, not what he would say in his own person, but only what he can say within the limits of one imaginary character addressing another imaginary character.' Poetry of the first voice according to him is verse which does not attempt communication with anyone. It is concerned only with self-expression of the poet. All lyrics are examples of it if we attach the widest possible significance to the word 'lyric'. The second voice is dominantly found in the epic and in all poetry that has a conscious social purpose—poetry intended to amuse or to instruct, poetry that tells a story, poetry that preaches or points a moral, or satire which is a form of preaching. The third voice is unique to poetic drama. Here the author not only imparts something of himself to his characters but is influenced by the characters he creates. Of these three voices, while only the first or the second are heard dominantly in other forms of literature, it is the unique glory of poetic drama that all the three voices are heard and heard harmoniously therein. It

demands of the dramatist that the creator be everywhere present and everywhere hidden.

The implications of T.S. Eliot's position sketched above are profound and far-reaching. He not only indicates why poetic drama is the best and most enduring form of literature, but also provides the means whereby the critic can distinguish between the different levels of literature. If the concern of the critic is to reach the core of the poet's experience, he will have to keep himself alive in different ways to lyric, epic and drama. The new approach of T.S. Eliot is calculated to assist the critic in his literary appreciation by imparting to him the very secret of the poetic process.

III

Now the New Sanskrit literary theory of Ānandavardhana known as *Dhvani* not only says much the same in essence, but was propounded by its author to remove the very prejudices sought to be cleared by T.S. Eliot. In the Old School of Sanskrit Poetics, the social and didactic purpose of poetry was so much emphasized that only epics were regarded as poems *par excellence*. Lyrics were given recognition only to the extent they served the above purpose. They did not distinguish at all between fiction and poetic drama though all drama in Sanskrit practice had a strong poetic element. Instead of recognising that the question of communication was no part of the poet's primary concern and that his self-expression might succeed most when it defied normal ways of usage, they attempted the impossible task of reducing such poetic usages (*Vakrokti*) into so many set patterns of *alaṅkāras* or figures of speech. Thus we might say in the words of Eliot that the second

voice had come to receive greater attention, setting limits even to the first voice. They never paused to reflect on the third voice in poetic drama since in their opinion it was not on a par with poetry, being primarily intended for the stage.

Ānandavardhana found these conventional principles unsound on almost every count since the primacy of *Pratibhā* (= creative imagination) or the first voice becomes the very bedrock of his new theory known as *Dhvani*. He devotes one whole chapter (viz., the IV) for a full exposition of the principle of *Pratibhā*. In the course of this exposition is proved the hollowness of the second voice when emptied of the first because it leans far too much on external figures for its effect. It is shown how the first voice obeys no laws except the genius of the poet and how there can be no poetry when it is unheard. A new analysis of the Sanskrit epics is made and the original conclusion drawn that the epics are great poetry only in so far as the first voice is heard in them no less distinctly than the second. Finally the artificial barrier that existed between drama and poetry is demolished and the principle is demonstrated that poetic drama is the best form of literature since the poet commands there a third voice in addition to the first two. Ānandavardhana's Sanskrit equivalent for 'voice' is the significant term *Dhvani* which literally means 'tone'.

Just as T. S. Eliot speaks of 'the first voice', 'the second voice' and 'the third voice', Ānandavardhana also speaks of three kinds of *Dhvani*. He even goes a step further and gives the three *Dhvanis* three distinct designations. Like Eliot, Ānandavardhana too holds that there will be no poetry when all the 'voices' or *Dhvanis* are

absent. Since Eliot's 'first voice' is the common condition of all literature, it comes very close to Ānandavardhana's *Rasadhvani*. *Rasa* is a poet's mental state which is neither personal nor purely impersonal, but wholly partaking of *Pratibhā* or creativity, dictating matter as well as form simultaneously and is instanced in Vālmīki whose *śoka* or sensitivity led to the *śloka* or poem, viz., the *Rāmāyaṇa*. We have only this first voice or poet's self-expression in pure lyrics or *Muktakas* while the second comes to the fore in epics which aim at communication. In these very epics, when an episode is dramatically treated, when the poet is speaking not directly, but through a character, we may look for the third voice. But we will miss it so long as the poet's purpose is to present narrative or event as it happened *(itihāsa)* historically. It is only in the world of drama that the poet's creation becomes supreme since he identifies himself imaginatively not with any single character, but with all characters whose natures may be mutually opposed. It is only then that the author's best expression of his inmost personality is achieved. To use Ānandavardhana's words, in lyrics, etc.—in Sanskrit theory lyric does not relate to the personal emotion of the poet but only to universalised experience—there is *Dhvani* of a single *Bhāva* or *Rasa;* in epics, etc., there is *Dhvani* of more than one *Rasa* and *Bhāva,* not necessarily falling into a unity. But in poetic drama there is *Dhvani* of several *Rasas* and *Bhāvas* which necessarily fall into a unity. From the poet's angle, this will be like saying that his speech is intimate in lyric, communicative and rhetorical in the epic but most significant and expressive in poetic drama. Since the essential core of the 'first voice' or *Pratibhā* can be recognised only by a trained man of taste, Ānandavardhana

says that only a *Sahṛdaya* is a literary critic. Since aliveness to the creative heart of the poet is the *sine qua non* of the critic, his intellectual judgments extend beyond the realm of the first voice though strongly grounded on it. So in Indian theory, *Dhvani* is not only related to *Rasādi*, but extends farther to *Vastu* and *Alaṅkāra*, i.e. matter communicated and manner of communication. While the first, i.e. *Rasādi-Dhvani*, is most rapid in its appeal and does not admit of graded study *(Asaṁlakṣyakrama)* the other types of *Dhvani* relating to sense *(Arthaśakti)* can be separately studied *(Saṁlakṣyakrama)*. And Ānandavardhana gives three significant names for these varieties :—

1. *Svataḥ-sambhavi:* lit. naturally possible.
2. *Kavi-prauḍhokti-siddha:* lit. imaginatively possible when the poet speaks in the first person.
3. *Kavi-nibaddha-prauḍhokti-siddha:* lit. imaginatively possible only in a character invented by the poet.

If the first relates to the objective and conventional manner of the epic poet, the second refers to the subjective and unrestrained nature of lyric inspiration while the third has reference to dramatic invention wherein the poet lives in all his characters. Ānandavardhana points out how the proper harmony between freedom and convention is reached only in *Rasa-aucitya* or the higher canon of unity of sentiment which is invariably illustrated in poetic drama. Another point noted by him is that the poet's imaginative sympathy or *Rasa-bhāva-samāhitatva* is more often than not accompanied by a swell of striking imagery and great poetry will be great because of all the *Dhvanis* acting in consort. Though the *Dhvanis* may be inter-mixed, yet their shades can be recognised as dominant or recessive in each passage. While *Rasādi* is the constant undercurrent, *Vastu*

and *Alaṅkāra* take all possible hues and colours in a given instance, the logical possibilities noted being: *Vastu-Vastu, Vastu-Alaṅkāra, Alaṅkāra-Alaṅkāra and Alaṅkāra-Vastu.* The poet speaks like a possessed man in lyric, etc., like a friendly counsellor in the epic, etc., while he is a true creator only in poetic drama. In Sanskrit poetics, the poet was honoured solely because of this last virtue of his, he being regarded as even superior to god Brahma.

From the above account, one might see that the essential secret of the poetic process so ably expounded by T. Ṣ. Eliot today was not unknown to ancient Indian literary critics. Though there are differences in detail, one cannot mistake the identity of approach.

XXIV

SOME THOUGHTS ON SANSKRIT LITERATURE

Today we owe much of our knowledge about Sanskrit literature to Western scholarship. At a time when Sanskrit was practically unknown beyond the borders of India, the value and importance of Sanskrit for all students of literature and culture in the world were singularly brought out by the tireless efforts of European scholars. Their critical method has indeed been successful in giving a connected and systematic account of the various phases of achievement in the history of Sanskrit literature. But at the same time their literary judgments, more often than not, betray a woeful ignorance of the spirit and genius of Indian culture. Thus in their opinion the vast collections of Vedic hymns are just curios in the realm of primitive religion, with an occasional gleam of poetry or a flash of intelligence; the Upanishads preach no consistent philosophy teeming as they do with widely divergent doctrines, and their interest lies only in so far as they may be characterised as the starting-points for future philosophical systems; the Gītā is a revolutionary work which challenges the sacerdotal tyranny over a caste-ridden society and which introduces the idea of Bhakti, a cult of the Bhāgavata sect, into the old Upanishadic conception; the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata are epics of the Heroic Age in India without any striking unity either of authorship or arrangement. They are vast in range and varied in situation; but the culture depicted is poor and primitive. The Classical tradition of Sanskrit *Kāvya*-Literature is too artificial and mechanical to merit any praise and even the occasional flickers of simplicity and originality are tainted by a didactic

and religious outlook which is extraneous to true poetry. And even the history of Fine Arts like Music and Painting, Sculpture and Architecture, shows the same normative tendency at work of blindly conforming to external standards, and realism is conspicuous by its absence, thus holding out for a modern student nothing but an antiquarian interest. As regards Indian Aesthetics, there is no such thing at all and a study of *Alaṅkāra-śāstra* is like studying the index of a book and not the book itself. Such are some of the commonplaces of Western judgment regarding Indian culture and they are often slavishly echoed even by Indians who have been educated along Western lines.

II

If for a moment we try to forget with a determined will these pieces of critical judgment so conveniently served out to us, and undertake an impartial survey of Sanskrit Literature which is representative of all great achievements truly Indian, we should turn towards our own traditional standards for light and guidance. There is nothing surprising in a Western branding Sanskrit as a dead language, in dismissing the fine flowers of Indian thought as so many lifeless dogmas or in passing a derisive estimate over Art and Literature, as his nature and nurture cannot be changed. But it behoves us Indians, the present custodians of all this rich legacy bequeathed by our ancients, not to toe the line blindly with the Westerners but to address ourselves to the task of reinterpretation and revaluation, which will serve to remove the many undeserved censures that have been heaped upon our culture. The task is a noble one but it is beset with several

difficulties. Before we teach, we must learn. The duty of discovering for ourselves the secret of our culture, the very life-informing spirit which gave birth to such varied manifestations of the Indian mind, devolves upon us and, it appears to the present writer that this golden key which we are now seeking lies in mysticism taken in its broadest sense, and a proper grasp of it as the undercurrent of all our cultural achievements will provide the right perspective for study and will enable us to correct the prejudiced and erroneous judgments that have been pronounced so often.

III

While the intrinsic relationship between mystic experience and religion is obvious and readily admitted, no such relationship is recognised by the moderners between Literature or Art and Mysticism. Nonetheless, it was a cardinal article of faith amongst our ancients. It was an established practice of all writers in Sanskrit, whether literary or scientific, religious or secular, to begin their compositions with a *maṅgala* or prayer to God. Even when no initial *maṅgalācaraṇa* was available in a given work, the usual explanation was that it had certainly been performed by the author at the commencement in his own way though not left on record. This procedure is very significant indeed inasmuch as it embodies a thoroughly Indian attitude towards all Literature and Art. This religious attitude may be recognised not only in the procedure of the poets, scholars and artists, but in that of the laymen also in their day-to-day affairs. Prayers to God were addressed by farmers before they ploughed or sowed or reaped; by traders and labourers when they began their day's work.

No one who neglects or underestimates this essential religiousness of the Indians can do justice to their achievements. While it is true that this land of millions harboured countless religions, creeds and sects, it is also true that there was an essential core of beliefs common to all these and a core which had become the very warp and woof of every individual that lived in India. While the externa differences have been strongly underlined, the intrinsic factors of unity and agreement have been neglected by foreigners.

IV

Our chief concern here is to examine this religious attitude at some length and show how it has helped the Indians in the past to rise to their full stature of personality in all cultural fields, but with particular reference to Literature. Man's life on this planet has been one long quest for enduring happiness and peace of mind. By merely leading an animal existence, neither his intellectual curiosity is satisfied, nor his spiritual craving stilled. Man is essentially driven to action by his innate instincts, emotions and desires, and he forges a society where he tries to attain the fullest measure of individual happiness without conflicting with the happiness of other individuals. Man's life thus becomes one long story of social adjustments but the discovery is made by some individuals at least whose spiritual sensibilities are strong, that this mundane, materialist way of life is not enough to ensure them lasting happiness and they yearn for finding out a solution of the problem. They stop not till the goal is reached and when they attain spiritual contentment, they preach what they know to be Truth from personal experi-

ence for the benefit of common men. The gospel may be one which is addressed to the intellect or one which appeals to the emotions. Thus the ultimate goal of human life is admitted by one and all to attain spiritual bliss or *Mokṣa,* though the paths may vary according to the nature and training of different individuals. This is how we may reconstruct the mental horizon of ancient India.

Even before the dawn of History, as early as the undated Vedas, this was the belief in India held by one and all. The Vedas were looked upon as sacred revelation containing all that there was to be known regarding ultimate Reality. The hoary sages were all persons of great spiritual eminence and the business of the individual was to exercise all his parts on these texts of undisputed authority in such wise as to find his self-fulfilment. The individual's greatness could be measured only in proportion to the degree of his spiritual advancement. This held good in all walks of life, in all castes and in all the professions.

But can we at this stage of human advancement in Science and Industry, justify such an outlook? Does it not stand more to reason to say that any such outlook stifles and stultifies real growth of the arts and the sciences? Indeed this has been the chief charge levelled against Indian culture from various quarters.

The problem must be faced squarely before any explanation can be attempted. Art and Literature at any rate, not to speak of the sciences, are activities of the human mind involving in their creation certain significant ideals and attitudes towards human life and calculated to awaken similar attitudes and ideals in the responsive connoisseurs. Indeed it will appear at first sight that the

genius of the poet or the artist proceeds ordinarily in a natural and spontaneous manner, and any conformity to external rules can only be taken as an obstruction to its smooth and even progress. This is the idea which lies at the bottom of the charge against Indian culture noted above; and it has become almost a commonplace of criticism. Hence this idea deserves to be subjected to a searching scrutiny and, if possible, the converging spheres of poetic experience and mystic experience noted.

V

The precise relationship between Man's experiences at different levels—Life, Art and Literature, Religion—should be examined at the outset. Life is indeed so complex and so varied that it provides innumerable possibilities of experience with varying degrees of pleasure and pain. But in the broadest analysis, we can only note the categories of pleasure and pain and there need be no fear that the other subtler shades omitted will mar the force of our argument; for we are concerned here with degrees of self-satisfaction attained at various levels of experience. At the lowest level, we may distinguish such types of pleasure as are instinctive or animal; we characterise such experiences of pleasure as higher that transcend the lower states not only in degree, but also in kind. Man is not a mere animal; he is a rational animal and he is also an imaginative and spiritual animal. . It is the burning zeal for understanding his own true nature and the world around him that account for the sciences and systems of philosophy. These bring him a type of satisfaction which may be termed intellectual. But when he becomes acutely conscious of the limitations of Science and Logic, his pleasure ceases to be abiding and

he turns his efforts in the field of Religion which vouchsafes to him spiritual pleasure and brings in its train everlasting peace and a sense of self-fulfilment. When he becomes keenly aware of the imperfections of instinctive pleasures, the short-comings of the things around him, the disorder and chaos in the scheme of things in the universe, he tries to manipulate them imaginatively and weave an ideal pattern of perfection through Art and Literature. Nor is this the only possibility. Art and Literature derive their inspiration from things of beauty in this work-a-day world too, but subject to one condition; and that is: the dry and limited associations of these must be completely removed and only the infinite aspects allowed to shine out supremely. What is very rare and but dimly felt in the ordinary world becomes the very stuff out of which poetry is woven. In either case, whether it is an imaginative construction or a re-construction of Reality the common element in both is unmistakable and it is the ideal transfiguration or manipulation of common values. Our ancients recognised this truth when they said that *atiśaya* or poetic exaggeration is the very soul of Literature.

If Art and Literature derive their inspiration from Life, it must be admitted that in a sense they are mirrors of Life at the ordinary level. But it does not mean a photographic representation; for these things do suffer a sea-change in the creative imagination of the artist which is fundamentally idealistic as we already saw. In the realm of Art and Literature the laws that prevail are not identical with the laws we are familiar with in ordinary life. They are more systematic and more universal. Aesthetic joy, too, is not on a par with instinctive pleasure. It is impersonal, idealised and more abiding than the personal and

limited joy in actual life. As such, it has been valued higher in Man's estimate throughout the centuries.

We saw above how Art and Literature enable Man to catch a wider glimpse of men and the universe, and the joy they bring is consequentially greater than that of life lived at the ordinary plane. If literature helps a man to rise above his selfish interests and broadens his mind and spirit thus bringing him higher joy, this function is achieved to its fullest only in spiritual pursuit of religion, where joy of the highest kind is vouchsafed. The mind of Man, which is almost a bundle of instincts, emotions and impulses at the animal level, is generally at war within itself and also torn asunder by conflicting interests from the outside. The conflicts are resolved and a sort of harmony is reached in enjoying a work of Art or Literature. This is the Indian view of *Rasa* wherein *sattvodreka* or spiritual purity predominates over the other *Guṇas* which are the sources of stress and strain, viz., *Rajas* and *Tamas*.

Thus understood, there will be no antagonism between the sphere of Art and Literature on the one hand and the sphere of religious experience or mysticism on the other. In fact spiritual Bliss *(Brahmānanda)* and aesthetic joy are the same in kind though they differ in degree. The degree of happiness is greatest in the beatific vision when all the contradictions in the world of experience are resolved and the true nature of Ultimate Reality is experienced; a vision where the spirit shines out supreme and the mind is broadened to its highest dimensions which are divine. It is indeed a foretaste of this divine bliss, supernal and sempiternal, that can be had in æsthetic experience, in however small a degree.

This truth was subscribed to by all sections of thought in ancient India and they held that a man's work gains in intensity and breadth only in proportion to the steady and sustained advancement of the spirit alongside of intellect. Thus the greatest Sanskrit poets, Vyāsa and Vālmīki were also *Ṛṣis* or sages, whose vision was perfect. Even secular poets considered it a proud privilege to train their imaginations in the way of the sages before they started writing. It was in a mood of devotion, of consecration, of concentrated mind, that they took to composing. This explains their procedure of *Maṅgalācaraṇa*. As for composition, so for appreciation. Nothing profane could have any place in the realm of culture as in the realm of religion.

Having thus indicated the spirit that has been permeating Sanskrit Literature throughout the centuries, we may now notice the art instanced therein. In religion, our ancients perfected several paths of discipline for the control and conquest of the mind. In Literature, too, which they fundamentally viewed as an Art, they propounded and followed several minute laws that are especially directed towards securing universal appeal. The art of the poet consists, according to our *Ālaṅkārikas,* in devising such ways and means as bring novelty and charm to the style without forgetting the primary object of awakening sympathetic aesthetic response from connoisseurs. In other words, *Alaṅkāras* in conformity with *Rasas* was their dictum. Over-elaboration of the formal aspects of poetry is not rare amongst some poets like Māgha and Srī-Harṣa, but it is only from our point of view whose minds are underdeveloped, relatively speaking. The poets in those days demanded of the critics a taste and education of the highest order and in the world of Art or Literature, no

amount of skill is really too much in absolute terms. When the skill or art becomes so universal and so subtle as to elude every ordinary mind, it might almost be taken as approximating to divine perfection. The work of the expert is always considered a waste by a layman and even the expert might fail to adjudge properly if the culture and mental advancement of the poet he is reviewing far outshines his own. Indeed it appears more decent to adopt a humbler attitude towards the stalwarts of yore in the field of literature and not to commit the fallacy of underestimating them with the unsaid pride of flattering ourselves as knowing much better. In Science and Industry we have certainly taken very rapid strides; but in cultural fields and religion, we need not overestimate ourselves. If our theorists tried to exhaust the various turns and twists that might be given to expressions to make them appear charming provided that the idea was poetic in itself, we need not call it a waste. It shows their power of keen analysis and a mind which knows no halting before achieving completeness and perfection.

VI

It might be said that the mystic element in Sanskrit Literature has not been properly appreciated by our critics. All our greatest poets have been uniformly regarded as the favourite children and chosen mouthpieces of *Sarasvatī*, the Goddess of Learning, in Indian tradition, even when they have been authors only of secular writings. Poets like Kālidāsa prayed: "May the tribe of poets increase whose greatness is built on the shining light of the sacred scriptures" (Cf. *Pravartatāṁ prakṛtihitāya pārthivaḥ, Sarasvatī śrutimahasāṁ mahīyatām*—the Bharata-vākya of Abhijñāna-

Śākuntala). It was this shining light of scriptures that shaped the personal life of the artists and that was also responsible for endowing their poetry with an immortal charm. This faith in God and spiritual values determined the procedure of the poet in everything—in the choice of theme, in the depiction of character and incident, in the delineation of emotions and sentiments, in the use of imagery and in the employment of diction. Another factor which influenced the literary art was their didactic or educational purpose; but it is also closely bound up with the former. All human pursuits were valued only in so far as they served as means to the acquisition of one or more of the four-fold fundamental end-values *(puruṣārthas)* of existence, viz., *Dharma, Artha, Kāma* and *Mokṣa,* and Literature was no exception. The last was the chief concern of *Mokṣa-śāstras,* no doubt; but no human activity could be justified when there was no harmony of the other three values *(trivarga)* with that of Moksa, and it was precisely this harmony that Literature and Art endeavoured to bring home to everyone in an appealing fashion. Hence a judicious presentation of the concepts of *Jñāna, Karma* and *Bhakti* is also common in Saṇskrit Literature alongside of literary sentiments and information of educative value. But the mainspring of literary creation was always spiritual advancement, alongside of cultivation of the intellect and refinement in taste.

Judged in this light, some of the objections raised regarding the open procedure adopted by Sanskrit poets in describing Woman, Wine and so forth, will appear wide of the mark. In Literature they considered it no sin to dwell at length on all aspects of the ideal creations and if the grosser aspects are openly and even sensuously brought

out, it is just an admission of an important truth that these things affect our lives most in the lower level of life. Frankness and candidness cannot be called a vice in the same sense as morbidness, and morbidness is something foreign to Sanskrit Literature. But ordinarily these are never treated as ends in themselves, but only as a background against which other equally or perhaps more important values like heroism are stressed. In the works of our masters, passion sheds all its earthly repulsiveness and offensiveness and partakes of a divine universality and purity. Sentimentality and impurity have no place in Sanskrit masterpieces and those writings of small men in which they abound stand self-condemned for that very reason.

VII

One word more regarding the art of Sanskrit Poesy. The verbal Figures of Speech like *Ślesa* and *Anuprāsa* have come in for much criticism. The truth of the matter seems to be that the Aryans perfected a language with an ear for music unprecedented in the histories of other peoples. And in the realm of Literature this genius of the language was richly exploited and new and newer shades of beauty achieved by them by persistent practice. One ought to be proud of this singular achievement which is the unique glory of Sanskrit literature. Similarly, wit, epigram, and antithesis contribute in their own way to intellectual alertness and strikingness. Our disciplines of rhetoric spoke of the several possible elements of grace only in relation to individual units that go to form the composite work and the place of Figures of Speech in judging a work as a whole was never over-emphasised though it is so made out by the critics.

VIII

We have often digressed in the course of the above discussion; but in spite of the digressions, it is believed that the central truth will stand out, that the atmosphere and achievement of Sanskrit Literature can be adequately appreciated only by a careful grasp of the Indian genius as essentially embodying spiritual advancement, not in opposition to worldly values as is often alleged, but in harmony with it. A deep study of Indian Art will reveal that the principles evolved are not merely futile exercises of cold reason unrelated to Life, but represent the heights of artistic perfection that have ever been reached by the human mind formulated in terms of the understanding. The fact that during the truly long period of a thousand years and more Sanskrit Literature exercised a living influence over all the provincial literatures is enough to combat the charge that it was a dead language long, long ago. Amidst the apparent diversities we have to discover its essential unity and the life-informing spirit which was able to nourish and sustain several literatures for long. It is only such a discovery on our part that can do justice to the deserving claims of Sanskrit among the great literatures of the world.

XXV

THE CONTRIBUTION OF KARNATAKA TO SANSKRIT LITERATURE

Thanks to the researches of scholars in ancient Indian history and archaeology, we are now in a position to state that the datable history of Karnataka goes as far back as the Christian era, and the achievements of the Karnataka rulers form one of the most glorious chapters in Indian history. Not only the famous kings among the Sātavāhanas, Gangas Rāshṭrakūṭas, Chālukyas, Yādavas, Hoysaḷas and the Vijayanagara rulers, but even feudatories like the Nāyaks of Ikkeri were great promoters of learning and very often great contributors to literature themselves. Whatever the religious persuasion of the rulers, the orthodox Vedic religion, Jainism and Śaivism, all received equal encouragement at their hands; and as one might naturally expect, Karnataka did throw up great writers in Sanskrit, Prakrit and Kannada in the long period of its recorded history.

For a few centuries (1st to 4th) in remote antiquity, Prakrit was the language preferred by the Sātavāhana kings who ruled over the present Maharashtra and North Karnataka (known as Kuntala earlier), and we have the rich anthology of 700 Prakrit lyrics known as *Sattasai* ascribed to Hāla Sātavāhana. It was during this period that Guṇāḍhya wrote his great romantic tale, *Bṛhatkathā,* in a dialect of ancient Prakrit known as Paiśācī, a work which won unstinted praise from great Sanskrit poets like Kālidāsa, Bāṇa and Daṇḍin, and proved a veritable source-book to Sanskrit poets and dramatists in later times. Though the work in the original is lost, three of its late (c. 12th century) Sanskrit renderings—the *Kathāsaritsāgara* of

Somadeva, the *Bṛhatkathāślokasaṁgraha* of Budhasvāmin and the *Bṛhatkathāślokamañjarī* of Kṣemendra are available today. Hāla's anthology found an able translator in Govardhana of Bengal (12th century) whose work was in its turn further translated into other languages like Hindi.

Even in those early days, Sanskrit remained the undisputed all-India language of the learned, and the Sātavāhana court arranged for the first simplified grammar of Sanskrit, known as the *Kātantravyākaraṇa*. This work by Śarvavarman was indeed such a boon to beginners, who are easily deterred from the complexities of the Pāṇinian system, that it became the basis for similar attempts in Bengal and Kashmir as late as the 14th century.

Under the rule of the Gaṅgas, we have inscriptional records—whose genuineness however is not beyond question—which credit Durvinīta (6th century) with the authorship of a Sanskrit rendering of *Bṛhatkathā*, a commentary on the difficult Fifteenth Canto of Bhāravi's great poem, *Kirātarjunīya*, and a grammar known as *Śabdāvatāra*. None of these are available now. But the extant *Jainendra Vyākaraṇa* by Pūjyapāda, *alias* Devanandi, was perhaps written under the patronage of Durvinīta. Two works published in fragment—*Avantisundarīkathā* (ascribed to Daṇḍin) and *Avantisundarīkathāsāra*—corroborate the fact of Bhāravi's contemporaneity with Durvinīta; but the genuineness of even these works has been called into question by scholars. Yet the fact stands out that Bhāravi was a southerner, and he is expressly praised along with Kālidāsa in the famous Aihoḷe inscription of Ravikīrti (A.D. 634).

One is in the dark about the province from which Kālidāsa hailed; but we have clear proofs (cf. *Kunteśvaradautya*) that he did visit the Kuntala court as a messenger of

his king, Chandragupta Vikramaditya. Bāṇa, in his review of the chief characteristics of different Sanskrit styles, lays his finger on poetic fancy as the hallmark of the southern style *(utprekṣā dākṣiṇātyeṣu)* and Bhāravi's poetry, abounding as it does in happy flights of fancy, amply bears out the remark of Bāṇa. The *Kirātārjunīya* indeed may be regarded as the first ornate epic which provided the model for the definitions of *mahākāvya* framed by Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin at a later date. Descriptions of set poetic themes—these are said to be 18 in number—like moonrise and sunset, ocean and mountain, seasons and sports, battle and city—at great length in a style bristling with conceits, both verbal and figurative, are seen in Bhāravi alongside of precepts on polity; and the meagre story serves as no more than a peg to hold all these in position. This is the new ornate tradition in Sanskrit poetry which Bhāravi initiated from the South, and it has remained the all-India poetic tradition in Sanskrit ever since.

In the field of drama, the renowned *Mṛcchakaṭika* by Śūdraka has been ascribed to the Gaṅga court (A. D. 670–750) by scholars like Dr. Saletore. The popularity of that play even on the modern stage has been demonstrated by its recent performances in the U. S. S. R. Again, one is not sure of the province of the earlier dramatist Bhāsa, admired even by Kālidāsa. One scholar from Madras—Prof. U. Venkatakrishna Rao—recently suggested that Bhāsa must be from Karnataka on the basis of a Sanskrit invocatory verse of his containing *dvitīyākṣaraprāsa* (rhyming second syllable in each line of verse) and some Kannada idioms in the dialogues of the plays.

Among Jaina contributions in ancient Karnāṭaka to their sacred literature in Sanskrit, Samantabhadra's *Mahābhāṣya*

on the *Tattvārthasūtras* of Umāsvāti and *Āptamīmāṁsā*, a polemical work, deserve particular mention. This divine (c. 4th century) is credited with the authorship of secular works also on medicine and grammar. The oft praised work of Sri Vardhadeva, known as *Cūḍāmaṇi*, (Vardhadeva is said to have elicited praise from Daṇḍin himself!) is however lost.

On the strength of references in the *bhāṣyas*, Dr. S. Srikantha Sastri concludes that the great Śaṁkarāchārya "wrote his commentaries in the dominion of the Chālukyas—Balavarma and Jayasiṁha" (*Sources of Karnaṭaka History*, pp. xxi–xxii). Early Chālukyan history is shrouded in mystery, and this is yet to be corroborated by other evidence. If it be true, this will go down in history as the greatest contribution of Karnataka to Indian philosophical literature in Sanskrit; for Śaṁkara was the first thorough-going exponent of Upanisadic Vedānta, by writing *bhāṣyas* on the *prasthānatrayī*. Śaṁkara's philosophy has found admirers not only in India but also in the West. According to the same scholar, the *Saṁkṣepaśarīraka* of Sarvajñātman, which is a reputed treatise in post-Śaṁkara Vedānta, was also written in the realm of the Chālukya King Ādityavarman, son of Pulakeśin II (*Ibid.*, p. 56). Perhaps the guess may be extended with equal force to the equally authoritative work *Pañcapādikā* by Padmapāda, said to be a direct disciple of Śaṁkara. The quality of poetry instanced in Ravikīrti's Aihoḷe inscription makes us conclude that Pulakeśin must have, like Harṣa in the North, patronised a number of literary luminaries, though their works have not come down to us.

Coming to Rāshṭrakūṭa times, we are more fortunate inasmuch as important works are extant. We know reliably

that Amoghavarṣa (9th century) was himself a great poet and patron of letters. Jinasena, his teacher, brought into being what was almost a new *genre* in Sanskrit literature by writing his *magnum opus*, the *Mahāpurāṇa*, which is at once a charming epic and a religious work. (He left it incomplete, but it was completed by Guṇabhadra, his pupil, who was, however, less gifted than the teacher.) The Sanskrit orthodox *Purāṇas* used to be devoid of poetic finish, and it is to the credit of Jinasena that he could infuse the charm of poetry into an otherwise arid narrative of religious myth. He became the forerunner of a new literary tradition for both Sanskrit and Kannada. We have also from his pen the *Pārśvābhyudaya*, which is a poetic feat of adding three more lines to each line of Kālidāsa's *Meghadūta* giving, in the result, a poem about the Jaina saint Pārśvanātha. This Jinasena is to be distinguished from an earlier Jinasena who is the author of an equally voluminous work in Sanskrit—the *Harivaṁśa*. A new system of Sanskrit grammar known as *Śākaṭāyana-vyākaraṇa* (this author being different from his namesake mentioned by Pāṇini) was also initiated in this king's court. Śākaṭāyana has himself written the gloss thereon known as *Amoghavṛtti*, after his patron. Another protégé of the king was Mahāvīra who wrote *Gaṇitasārasaṅgraha*, an interesting mathematical work. Amoghavarṣa himself is sometimes regarded as the author of a *Praśnottararatnamālikā*, a collection of pretty didactic lyrics in the form of question and answer. A work on medicine known as *Kalyāṇakāraka* by Ugrāditya also belongs to this period.

A very significant contribution to Sanskrit literature in the Rāshṭrakūṭa period was in the Campū form. The first Campū-kāvya in Sanskrit we have is the *Nalacampū* by

Trivikramabhaṭṭa in the reign of King Indra III. In this form we see the happy blend of Bāṇa's brilliant prose with majestic measures found earlier only in lyrics and plays. In fact Karnāṭaka writers had a special fascination for this *genre* and it is even supposed by some scholars that the word Campū itself may be of Kannada origin. The second great Campū in Sanskrit is also from Karnataka, the *Yaśastilaka* to wit. Its author, Somadeva (c. 960 A.D.) is not merely a great poet but also encyclopaedic in the range of the subjects in which he took an interest.

Halāyudha's *Kavirahasya* is an interesting work illustrating Sanskrit roots in graceful verses, and it was written in the reign of King Krishna III. The powerful play *Caṇḍakauśika* by Kṣemīśvara was again a work of this period as is evident from its prologue. So too is Asaga's *Vardhamānacarita*. Asaga is a great name among the pioneers of Kannada literature.

Under the Western Chālukyas also we see great works in Sanskrit being produced. It was in the court of King Jayasiṁha III (A.D. 1018–1042) that the far-famed Vādirāja flourished. On him every superlative has been heaped in Jaina inscriptions as a poet and debater. His *Yaśodharacarita* and *Pārśvanāthacarita* are very good poems after Kālidāsa's manner. A contemporary of Vādirāja was Vādībhasiṁha, *alias* Oḍeyadeva, the author of two readable prose romances in Sanskrit—*Gadyacintāmaṇi* and *Kṣatracūḍāmaṇi*, the latter containing some historical matter also. To this period again belongs the *Chandonuśāsana* of Jayakīrti, edited recently by Prof. H.D. Velankar. This is an important work on Sanskrit prosody standing midway between Kedārabhaṭṭa's *Vṛttaratnākara* and Hemacandra's *Chandonuśāsana*. The Konkan ruler Mummuniraja (c. 1060 A. D.) patronised

Soḍhala, the author of *Udayasundarīkathā*, a Campū work of note in view of its references to earlier writers. In his *Rāshṭrakūṭas and their Times*, Dr. A.S. Altekar writes: "It was during our period that the literature on poetics flourished luxuriantly in the valley of Kashmir. The rugged Deccan had, however, hardly any contribution to make to that department." A stray exception is provided by the short but interesting *Alaṅkāracintāmaṇi* of Ajitasena, dated 980 A. D. by Dr. S. Srikantha Sastri, but actually as late as the 14th century.

The Chālukya ruler Vikramāditya VI (1076–1126 A.D.) was a patron of the Kashmirian poet Bilhaṇa who wrote in his court the semi-historical poem *Vikramāṅkadevacarita*. It was in this king's court that the renowned *Mitākṣarā* was written by Vijñāneśvara. As Dr. Kane observes, "the *Mitākṣarā* occupies a unique place in the Dharmaśāstra literature. Its position is analogous to that of the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali in grammar or to that of the *Kāvyaprakāśa* of Mammaṭa in poetics. It represents the essence of Dharmaśāstra speculation that preceded it for about two thousand years and it became the fountainhead from which flowed forth streams of exegesis and development." (*History of Dharmaśāstra,* Vol. I, p. 287). It is not merely a commentary on *Yājñavalkyasmṛti*. It is a digest of smṛtis explaining contradictions among them by following the rules of interpretation laid down in the Pūrvamīmāṁsā system. It has continued to be held in high esteem, and indeed is still accepted as an authoritative source of Hindu law.

In the field of *Purāṇas* too, some scholars opine that the far-famed *Bhāgavata*, though ascribed to Vyāsa, is really the work of a Southerner (of about the 10th century) as

there are clear passages in the XI Book in praise of the River Kāverī.

The Chālukya emperor Someśvara IV got up what is perhaps the first encyclopaedia in Sanskrit—the *Abhilaṣitārthacintāmaṇi* or *Rājamānasollāsa*. It is a work in 100 cantos and "throws valuable light on almost all aspects of Karnāṭaka culture, from cooking to kingship. It deals with all the arts, sciences and amusements of kings." Aparārka, another significant commentator on *Yājñavalkyasmṛti*, was a protégé of this ruler, Someśvara.

The disappearance of the Chālukya power was followed by the rise of the Yādavas of Devagiri and the Hoysalas of Dorasamudra. Under the Yādavas we find reputed writers like Hemādri who wrote smṛti digests like the *Caturvargacintāmaṇi* and *Vratakhaṇḍa*. The *Sūktimuktāvali* of Jalhaṇa, which is an anthology of subhāṣitas, and the *Saṅgītaratnākara* which is an authoritative work on music by Śārṅgadeva, were inspired by the Yādavas.

Tradition has it that the great Śrīvaishṇava teacher, Rāmānuja, was given asylum by Hoysaḷa Vishnuvardhana and that his great philosophical works were written in the Hoysaḷa State. Confirmatory evidence, however, for the tradition is not yet available. A great Sanskrit poet who adorned the Hoysaḷa court (13th century) of King Vīraballāḷa was Vidyācakravartin. He held such titles as *Samskṛta-sārvabhauma* and *Sahajasarvajña*. His works include: *Sañjīvinī*—a commentary on the *Alaṅkārasarvasva*, *Sampradayaprakāśini*—a commentary on the *Kāvyaprakāśa*, *Virūpākṣapancāśikā*—a poem, and *Rukmiṇīkalyāṇa*—a play. His son, Sakalavidyācakravartin, wrote *Gadyakarṇāmṛta*, a prose panegyric of his patron. A sample of the Sanskrit poetry cultivated by the Hoysala court, in Dr. J. D.

Derrett's English rendering, is given below:

A forest-dwelling maiden shy
Roams in the city of thy foe—
Ballāla, who art lord of all!—
A noble city left to die.
Her eye is caught by flashing fire
From gems dropped heedless on the ground—
She fancies charcoal embers spread,
And quickly, lest they first expire,
Blows on them tiny sandal-chips,
Her eyes half-closed against the ash:
No incense rises, but a swarm
Of bees seeks fragrance from her lips.
They hover close: she thinks them smoke.
(Strange errors thy just wars provoke!)

Among Vīraśaiva writers too there was great literary activity during the 12th century, and in case some late author has not fathered the work on Śrīpatipaṇḍita, his *Śrīkarabhāṣya* will rank as the earliest contribution of the Vīraśaivas to Sanskrit philosophical literature. But the genuineness of the authorship has often been impugned by modern scholars. We find Kavirāja, a poet from Banavasi (c. 1200) popularising the tradition of dvisandhānakāvya, or poetry which can yield two stories in one work, by writing *Rāghavapāṇḍavīya*.

If Karnāṭaka provided an asylum for the Vedāntic teachers, Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja, it was the very birthplace and home of activity of the celebrated champion of *Dvaita*, Madhvācarya, whose date has been worked out to be between A.D. 1239 and 1317 by Dr. Saletore (*Ancient Karnaṭaka*, Vol. I, p. 432). Some 37 works are ascribed to Madhvācārya, the chief among them being *Gītābhāṣya*,

Gītātātparya, Sūtrabhāṣya, Aṇubhāṣya, Mahābhāratatātparya-nirṇaya, Pramāṇalakṣaṇa, Tattvasaṅkhyāna, Māyāvādakhaṇḍana, Tattvodyota, Viṣṇutattvanirṇaya, the others forming glosses on Upaniṣads mostly.

But it was with the establishment of the Vijayanagara empire in 1336 that the heyday of Karnatak history was reached in every department of life and culture. Naturally, the Karnataka contribution to Sanskrit reached its zenith under the unstinted patronage of these rulers up to the end of the 16th century.

The most notable literary figures in this golden age of revival of old learning were the brothers Mādhava and Ṣāyaṇa. Both held ministerial posts in the reign of Bukka, and under their guidance available knowledge in all branches of Sanskrit study, secular and sacred, was systematised and written down in the form of manuals and textbooks. The following standard works are from the pen of Mādhava on Brahmanic religion:

Parāśarasmṛtivyākhyā, Kālamādhavīya, and *Jaiminīyanyāyamālāvistara.* He is traditionally identified with Vidyāraṇya, the great Advaita philosopher-statesman, while some scholars are chary of accepting the identification as genuine. If the tradition be true, then the classical works of the Advaita system, *viz.*, *Vivaraṇaprameyasaṅgraha, Jīvanmuktiviveka* and *Pañchadaśī* will all be from Mādhava's pen after he assumed saṁnyāsa and took the name of Vidyāraṇya. The popular biography of Śaṁkara called *Śaṁkaravijaya* is also ascribed to Mādhava; but internal evidence shows it to be the work of a much later author known as Abhinavakālidāsa in the Vijayanagara court.

The work of Sāyaṇa is more than amazing. For the first time in the history of India, all the Vedic scriptures—

the truly extensive *Saṁhitās* and the major *Brāhmaṇas* of the four Vedas—were fully explained and annotated word by word in classical Sanskrit. For Vedic exegesis, Sāyaṇa's *Bhāṣya* is an invaluable key embodying ancient tradition, and even modern scholars who differ from him in details of interpretation have recognised the indispensable help of *Sāyaṇabhāṣya*. This in itself is more than a life-work; but we have also from Sāyaṇa's pen the following standard works, each a compendium of merit and really astounding in size: *Subhāṣitasudhānidhi* (anthology), *Karmavipāka* (smṛti) *Yajñatantrasudhānidhi* (ritual), *Alaṅkārasudhānidhi* (poetics), *Puruṣārthasudhānidhi* (Purāṇa), and *Mādhavīyā Dhātuvṛtti* (on roots). Some scholars have suggested that Sāyaṇa must have utilized the services of a number of pandits who wrote works in his name. One cannot easily decide this issue one way or the other. Sāyana's son, whose name is again Mādhava, wrote the most popular history of Sanskrit philosophy, the *Sarvadarśanasaṅgraha*. At the same time we have another Mādhava (mantrin), a disciple of the Śaiva teacher Kriyāśakti, who wrote a commentary on the *Sūtasaṁhitā*. *Nānārtharatnamālā*, a lexicon, was written by Irugappa, minister of Harihara II.

We find a woman writer too in this period, Gangādevī. She was the queen of Kampaṇa, son of Bukka, who conquered the Cola territory for Vijayanagar, and in her charming poem, *Madhurāvijaya*, she eulogises the conquest of Madura by her husband. Its poetic merits are of a very high order.

Prauḍhadevarāya II (1422–48 A.D.) wrote *Ratiratnapradīpikā*, a text-book on erotics. Under Devarāya, we find the court-poet Diṇḍima writing the ornate epics *Sāluvābhyudaya* and *Rāmābhyudaya*, and in the reign of

Achyutarāya was composed the *Achyutarāyābhyudaya*. All these are semi-historical poems. A poetess, Tirumalāmbā, wrote the *Varadāmbikāpariṇayacampū* in praise of her patron Achyutarāya. Krishnadevarāya himself is reputed to have been the author of poems like *Madālasācarita* and plays like *Jāmbavatīkalyāṇa*. His court-poet Lolla Lakṣmīdhara wrote the *Daivajñavilāsa*, which is an encyclopaedic work, besides a commentary on Śaṁkara's *Saundaryalaharī*.

Great names in the history of Sanskrit literature like Vedānta Dēsika (Śrivaiṣṇava), Appayya Dīkṣita (Śaiva and Advaita champion), and Vādirāja (Dvaitin) were all patronised by the Vijayanagar Court, now at the height of its glory. A number of commentaries and scholia were written during this period by the adherents of different religious sects, which cannot be mentioned here. We may note in passing that the age of creative writing was over and had given place to an age of manuals, tracts and compendiums in every branch of study.

That the cultivation of Sanskrit learning continued even in the courts of feudatories is evidenced by the vogue of encyclopaedic works like Basavappa Nāyaka's (A.D. 1696–1714) *Śivatattvaratnākara*. The work consists of 108 chapters and is the essence of all sciences of knowledge coming within the purview of the Vedas and the Āgamas. There is material of interest to historians also, as it gives accounts of the biography of Basaveśvara and the founding of the Vijayanagara empire. It deals, like *Mānasollāsa* noticed already, with varied topics like the geography of India, town-planning, architecture, iconography, music, army manoeuvres, theatres, painting, dancing, astrology, the training of horses, cows, elephants etc., besides matters of religious interest culled from various Śaiva Āgamas and

Purāṇas. The book deserves a critical edition. Another work of the same author is *Subhāṣitasuradruma*, an anthology of poetic gems. The well-known Kannada poet Ṣadakṣaradeva wrote the poem *Kavikarṇarasāyana*, which is published but in part.

In the eighteenth century too we find Sarvādhikārī Kalale Nanjaraja of Mysore under Krishnaraja II (1734–60) patronising poets like Nṛisiṁhakavi who wrote the *Nañjarājayaśobhūṣaṇa* (poetics) after the manner of Vidyānātha's *Pratāparudrayaśobhūṣaṇa*. Nañjarāja himself is the author of a highly praised work on music, the *Saṅgītagaṅgādhara*.

Even this rapid survey is enough to indicate the nature and extent of the contribution of Karnataka to Sanskrit literature. The contribution has been in all fields and has extended uniformly over the centuries. It has been solid and conspicuous in the case of religion and philosophy, and signal and unique in certain forms of literature like the campū and encyclopaedic works. It has been remarkable in the field of dharmaśāstra, historical poems and music. It has been of no mean order in the matter of the other sciences and the arts. In point of commentaries too, Karnatak may well be proud of its contribution.

XXVI

THE DATE OF AJITASENA'S ALAṂKĀRACINTĀMAṆI*

I

While surveying 'Karṇāṭaka's contribution to Sanskrit Literature', I was drawn to the *Alaṁkāracintāmaṇi* of Ajitasena as a singular contribution of Karṇātaka scholarship to the field of Sanskrit Poetics. From the earlier notices of scholars which I had occasion to consult in this connection, the work appeared to hail from the reputed poet-scholar-pontiff Ajitasena (of the 10th century A.D.), the *guru* of illustrious Ganga kings like Mārasiṁha II, glorious ministers like Cāmuṇḍarāya and well-known Kannada poets like Ranna—all unforgettable names in Karṇāṭaka history. When I found that an old palmleaf manuscript of this very work was available here in the Library of the Kannada Research Institute (No. 797), I took up the task of studying the same[1] alongside of the printed copy received from Dr. Upadhye. I find that the earlier views regarding the author and his date need revision and I proceed to show how the work cannot be earlier than the 14th century A.D. in the light of internal evidence furnished by the work itself.

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*I am highly indebted to Dr. A. N. Upadhye for several valuable suggestions and also for sparing for my use his personal copy of the now rare edition of this work printed at Kolhapur in 1907 as a work of Jinasena.

[1] I am thankful to Dr. B.A. Saletore, the Director of the Institute, for giving me facilities to study the Manuscript.

II

The first scholarly account of the *Alaṁkāracintāmaṇi* appears in Dr. S. K. De's *Studies in the History of Sanskrit Poetics*[2]:—

" '*Alaṁkāracintāmaṇi* Edited by Padmarāja Paṇḍita in the Kāvyāṁbudhi, 1893-94'.[3] The author was the Jaina priest of Cāmuṇḍarāya, minister of the Gaṅga king Rāca-malla, and flourished in the latter part of the 10th century. He was the teacher of Nāgavarman, a Kanarese poet, who lived under the protection of Rakkasa Gaṅga, younger brother of Rācamalla. Ajitasena also wrote *Cintāmaṇi-prakāśikā* on Yakṣavarman's *Cintāmaṇi* which is itself a commentary on Śākaṭāyana's *Śabdānuśāsana*."[4]

These two works were first noticed by Rice[5] and it was Hultzsch who first ascribed them both to the

[2] Vol. I, p. 283.,

[3] Dr. A.N. Upadhye informs me that *Kāvyāmbudhi* is the name of an old (now defunct) Kannada journal published from Mysore or Bangalore. My attempts to secure this edition proved unsuccessful.

[4] Dr. De also notices another work of Ajitasena, viz., the *Śṛṅgāra-mañjarī*, written at the instance of a Jaina prince of the lunar race named Rāya or Kāmirāya for his instruction. It consists of 3 chapters and 128 stanzas dealing with *Doṣas* (I), *Guṇas* and only ten *alaṅkāras*—उपमा, रूपक, जाति, भ्रान्तिमान्, हेतु, संशय, प्रतिवस्तूपमा, आक्षेप, दृष्टान्त and तुल्ययोगिता—(op. cit. p. 284). Even this is not the work of the great Ajtasena of the 10th century, as some times supposed. In this connection, *Vide*- Seshagiri Shastri, *Report* on Search for Sanskrit and Tamil Mss. for 1893-94, Madras, p. 83; & Krishnam-achari, *History of Sanskrit Literature*, p. 752.

[5] Sanskrit Manuscripts in Mysore and Coorg, p. 304, No. 2795; p. 308, No. 2818.

far-famed Ajitasena, eulogised in the *Malliṣeṇapraśasti* of Śravaṇabelagola.[6] Hultzsch says:—He may be identified with Ajitasenācārya, the author of the *Alaṁkāracintāmaṇi* and *Maṇiprakāśikā*.[7] That the full title of this latter work—which we shall not discuss here—was *Cintāmaṇi-prakāśikā* is corroborated by Hiralal[8] and that this was a gloss on Yakṣavarman's commentary called *Cintāmaṇi* on the *Amoghavṛtti* of *Śākaṭāyana-vyākaraṇa* is noted by Belvalkar.[9]

Prof. H. D. Velankar[10] and Dr. P. V. Kane[11] notice the *Alaṁkāracintāmaṇi* but do not add any further details about its author.

Dr. V. Raghavan, however, notes the following information in his *New Catalogus Catalogorum* about the work under consideration:—

> "*Alaṁkāracintāmaṇi*—by Ajitasena, a Jain *guru* of the Śāntīśvara temple at Baṅgavāḍi. Arrah, I.A. p. 22—author given as Jinasena probably wrong .... commentary Mysore I. p. 295 mentions that Ajitasena wrote the work in the Śāntīśvara temple at Baṅgavāḍi-pura".

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[6] In this eulogy we find that Ajitasena held the title *Vādībha-siṁha*; cf.

सकलभुवनपालानम्रमूर्धावबद्धस्फुरितमुकुटचूडालीढपादारविन्दः ।

मदवदखिलवादीभेन्द्रकुम्भप्रभेदी गणभृदजितसेनो भाति वादीभसिंहः ।

—verse 57 (*Ibid*).

[7] Epigraphia Indica, Vol. III, p. 184 ff.

[8] Catalogue of Sanskrit & Prakrit Mss. in C.P. and Berar, p. xxv.

[9] Systems of Sanskrit Grammar.

[10] Jinaratnakośa.

[11] History of Alaṁkāra Literature, *Index*.

The edition of the work printed at Kolhapur also ascribes the work to Jinasena instead of Ajitasena, and the same is the conclusion of L. B. Gandhi.[12] Dr. S. Srikaṇṭha Sastri too thinks that "this Ajitasena was also called Jinasena",[13] adding that 'this work may be dated c. 980 A.D.' on the basis of an inscription from Muḷagunda.

The above survey shows that no scholar has seriously doubted the ascription of *Alaṁkāracintāmaṇi* to the famous Jaina pontiff of the 10th century in Karṇāṭaka history.

III

In spite of the consensus of opinion seen above, the internal evidence, to be set out presently, will leave little doubt about the *Alaṁkāracintāmaṇi* as coming from an Ajitasena of a much later period. Much of the earlier error in ascription is due perhaps to the prefatory remarks made by Śāntarāja, the very late author (1808 A. D.)[14] of what is just a fragment of a commentary—running to just four pages—on this work. This commentary is found in the Manuscript (in Kannada characters) No. A. 67 belonging to the Oriental Research Institute, Mysore. The remarks are:—

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[12] Introduction to Narendraprabhasūri's *Alaṁkāramahodadhi*' Gaekwar Oriental Series.

[13] Sources of Karṇāṭaka History, pp. 168 & 171.

[14] Cf. शाकेऽब्दे नगसूपभाजि .... (colophon of commentary). न = O (or 5), ग = 3, सू = 7 प = 1 (SS 1730+78 = 1808 A.D.(?) I owe this explanation to Pandit Narayanaswami Sastri of the Mysore Oriental Research Institute.

स्वस्ति श्रीमदनवरतविनमदमरेश्वरप्रभृतिशतेन्द्रमणिमस्तकमणिकिरणसमूहकृतपुष्पाञ्जलिपदकमलयुगलार्हत्परमेश्वरमुखकमलविनिर्गतानेकान्तात्मक - परमागमाम्भोधिवर्धनसुधासूतिभव्यजनहृदयालङ्कार - चार्वाकमीमांसकवेदान्तवैशेषिकभाट्टप्राभाकरकाणादादिसमस्तवादिकल्पितकुमतकुधरकुलिशायमान - समस्यापूरणाद्यखिल चातुर्यसमेत - जिनसमयगगनमार्ताण्डमण्डलायमान-समस्तराजाधिरापरमेश्वरनतचरण युगल: अजितसेनमुनीश्वर: बङ्गवाडिपुरस्थशान्तीश्वरचैत्यालयेऽलङ्कारशास्त्रं चिकीर्षुस्तत्र मङ्गलमाचरति-श्रीमतेत्यादि ।

This late commentator wants us to believe that the author Ajitasena is none other than the *guru* who was worshipped by great emperors of yore and was reputed for his learning in all the systems of Indian Philosophy, and that he composed his work in the famous temple of Śāntīśvara in Baṅgavāḍipura. While it is true that towns of the latter name are mentioned in some inscriptions,[15] we are not so sure that there was any shrine of Śāntinātha in any of these out-of-the-way towns. On the other hand, we are pretty certain that the scene of activity of the famous Ajitasenāchārya of the 10th century was the celebrated city of Baṅkāpura[16] where the shrine of Śāntinātha was situated. This late commentator thus appears to be confused in his tradition, mistaking as he does Baṅkapura with Baṅgavādipura, and cannot therefore be taken very seriously in his other statement about the identity of the author.

IV

The Kolhapur edition of the *Alaṁkāracintāmaṇi*, mentioned already, contains the following statement by the scribe:—

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[15] e. g., one in Kolar taluk and another in Mulabagal taluk; *vide: Epigraphia Carnatica*, Vol. X. Baṅgavāḍi, however, is known traditionally to form a division of the Tulu country on the West Coast.

[16] Vide: *Epigraphica Indica*, Vol. XIII, No. 14, p. 168 ff.

"जगत्पूज्यविन्ध्याग्रे इक्ष्वाकुवरवंशजम् ।
सुरासुरादिवन्द्यांघ्रि दोर्बलीशं नमाम्यहम् ॥
राजाधिराजचामुण्डराज्ञा निर्मितपत्तनम् ।
तत्पुरे स्थितवतां चारुकीर्तिपण्डितयोगिनाम् ॥
प्लवसंवत्सरे मासे शुक्ले च सुशरद्दतौ ।
आश्विजे च चतुर्दश्यां युक्तायां गुरुवासरे ॥
एतद्दिनेष्वलङ्कारचिन्तामणिसमाह्वयम् ।
सम्यक् पठित्वा श्रुत्वाहं सम्पूर्णं शुभमस्तु नः ॥
काश्यपे नाम्नि गोत्रे च सूत्रे चाह्वाननाम्नि च ।
प्रथमानुयोगशाखायां वृषभवरेऽपि च ।
एतद्वंशेषु जातोऽहं........"

This date, according to the Indian Calendar, appears to correspond with the date 10-10-1412 of the English calendar.[17] And that supplies us the *terminus ad quem* of the work.[18]

V

Bhujabali Sastri is of the opinion that Vādībhasiṁha, *alias* Oḍeyadeva, the author of two interesting prose romances—*Gadyacintāmaṇi* and *Kṣatracūḍāmaṇi*—is identical with the famous Ajitasena eulogised by Malliṣeṇa.[19] But Nāthū Rām Premi is chary of accepting this identification.[20]

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[17] I am indebted to Pandit Sri Narayanaswami Sastri for this calculation. But there is room for verification of the suggested correspondence.

[18] The edition seems to be based on a single Ms. running up to the end since the editor, Sakharam Nemicandra Dosi remarks at the end—एतावत्पर्यन्तमेव प्राचीनपुस्तके लभ्यते । There is only one variant reading suggested in the whole book (on p. 70) which is ostensibly based on another incomplete Ms.

[19] जैन-सिद्धान्त-भास्कर, Vol. VI, No. 2 and Vol. VII, No. 1.

[20] जैन-सिद्धान्त और इतिहास, (1956), p. 314f.

There is also one Ajitasena in the *Paṭṭāvalī* of the Senagaṇa published by Dr. Upadhye.[21] But these are not of much help in determining the authorship of the *Alaṅkāracintāmaṇi.*

VI

In the absence of decisive external evidence, we shall turn to internal evidence. After salutations to Śāntinātha, Sarasvatī and 'Samantabhadrādi-Kavikuñjaras', the author plunges into the subject direct with the observation that his illustrative verses, being mostly culled out from works like *'Pūrvapurāṇa'* and in praise of merited souls, would, in a way, endow his own work with something of the worth of a *stotra.*[22] The work alluded to seems to be Jinasena's. Clearer is the reference in the verse:—

श्रीमत्समन्तभद्रार्यजिनसेनादिभाषितम् ।
लक्ष्यमात्रं लिखामि स्वनामसूचितलक्षणम् ॥
(AC II, 28)

where both Jinasena and Samantabhadra are mentioned. Twenty verses set out as illustrations of riddle *(prahelikās)* in this context are from Jinasena's Pūrvapurāṇa.[23] The

[21] Jaina Antiquary, Vol. XIII, No. 2, p. 6.

[22] अत्रोदाहरणं पूर्वपुराणादिसुभाषितम् ।
पुण्यपूरुषसंस्तोत्रपरं स्तोत्रमिदं ततः ॥
—(15) References are to the printed edn.

[23] One example may be noted:
वटवृक्षः पुरोऽयं ते घनच्छायः स्थितो महान् ।
इत्युक्तोऽपि न तं धर्मं श्रितः कोऽपि वदाद्भुतम् ॥—
—*AC* (Alaṁkāracintāmaṇi), II 29 & Pūrvapurāṇa, XII, 226.

latter's invocation[24] too is quoted in the chapter on figures of speech (IV).

Samantabhadra's verse: —

अवटुतटमटति झटिति स्फुटचटुवाचाटधूर्जटेर्जिह्वा ।
वादिनि समन्तभद्रे स्थितवति का कथान्येषाम् ॥

is given as an instance of *arthāpatti alaṅkāra;*[25] and at the close of the section on *Cakrabandha or diagram-poetry,*[26] we have a reference to Samantabhadra's *Jinaśataka.*

Amoghavṛtti is referred to once.[27]

A sly but deliberate reference to Vidyānanda, the author of *Aṣṭasahasrī,* is unmistakable in the puzzle:

चकाराष्टसहस्रीं को मुनिवृन्दारको भुवि ।
मध्यवर्णद्वयं त्यक्त्वा का जायन्ते वदागमात् ॥ 'विद्यानन्द:' ॥

But all these authors are earlier than the 10th century, and these allusions do not militate against the ascription of the work to Ajitasena of the tenth century.

But there is at least one other equally unmistakable author referred to; and that is Vāgbhaṭa, who is mentioned twice. The two passages are:—

1. उदात्तत्वमौदार्येऽन्तर्भवति वाग्भटाद्यपेक्षया ।[28]
2. पदानामर्थचारुत्वप्रत्यायकपदान्तरैः ।
   मिलितानां यदादानं तदौदार्यं स्मृतं यथा ॥[29]

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[24] श्रीमते सकलज्ञानसाम्राज्यपदमीयुषे ।
धर्मचक्रभृते भर्त्रे नमस्संसारभीमुषे ॥

The figure is declared to be Rūpaka here.

[25] *AC* IV, 83.

[26] *AC* II, 64 f.

[27] भवते प्राप्नुते भवे प्राप्ताविणिरिति ।
अमोघवृत्तावुक्तत्वादात्मनेपदम् ॥— —*AC* III, 14 f.

[28] *AC* V, 8f,

[29] *AC* V, 95 f. and Vāgbhaṭālaṁkāra, III. 4.

Though there are two Vāgbhaṭas in the history of Sanskrit Poetics, the one alluded to here is clearly the first, the author of *Vāgtbhaṭālaṁkāra*, who is positively known to have lived in the 12th century A.D., as he was a contemporary of King Jayasiṁha (1093–1143). These passages go to prove that our Ajitasena was not earlier than the 12th century. An idea of how much later he might have been is furnished by the following considerations.

VII

That the author's name was only Ajitasena, and not at all Jinasena, is proved by another verse in *Cakrabandha*[30] in which the author has cleverly, but clearly, mentioned his name as also an alternate name of the work as a whole. The author has supplied the key also in the words:

> "अत्र एकाद्यङ्कक्रमेण पठिते सति अजितसेनकृतचिन्तामणि : भरतयशसीति गम्यते ।"

It emerges that the name of the composition was '*Bharata-yaśas*' and that the author's name was Ajitasena.

The name '*Bharata-yaśas*' suggested as an alternative title of the work makes us suspect some model for his procedure; and one need not be surprised that the model is furnished by the *Pratāparudra-yaśobhūṣaṇa* of Vidyānātha, who lived in the 13th century. In fact, it is the only work where both the author's name and the name of the work

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[30] अत्याकृत्यमलो वरो भवयमः कुर्वन्मतिं तापसे
तत्त्वाचिन्त्यमतिश्रिता तव सितः स्तुत्योरुवाणिः पुन : ।
जिष्णूतस्फुटकीर्तिवारवशम : श्रेयोऽभिदे मण्डने
धीर स्थापय मां पुरो गुरुवर त्वं वर्धमानोरुधी : ॥

AC, III. 179.

are found imbedded in an identically same *Cakrabandha* with an identical formula for reading the letters in the required order so that the concealed names may be got at. There the form of the message is:[31]

"अत्र चक्रबन्धे वैजनाथकृति-वीररुद्रयश इति सम्भाव्यते ।"

Of course, one might argue that Ajitasena might himself have provided the model for Vidyānātha to follow. But such a view is silenced by a perusal of the innumerable examples of similarities that extend to definitions of concepts like *śayyā*, *pāka* and *saṅghaṭanā* on the one hand and, on the other, exposition, division, classification and illustration of practically every *alaṁkāra* and *guṇa*. An unbiased scholar can easily see which way the borrowing lies, and that in this case it is Ajitasena's and not *vice versa*. A few typical examples are set out below in opposite columns :—

Pratāparudrīya	*Alaṁkāracintāmaṇi*
1. *on Figures:* रसवत्प्रेयऊर्जस्विसमाहितभावोदयभावसन्धिभावशबलतासु रस भावादिर्व्यंज्यते । उपमाविनोक्त्यर्थान्तरन्यासविरोधविभावनोक्तगुणनिमित्त - विशेषोक्तिविषमसमचित्राधिकान्योन्य - कारणमालैकावलीव्याघातमालादीपक - काव्यलिङ्गानुमानसारयथासंख्यार्थापत्ति - पर्यायपरिवृत्तिपरिसंख्याविकल्पसमुच्चयसमाधिप्रत्यनीकप्रतीपविशेषनिमीलन - सामान्यासङ्गतितद्गुणातद्गुणव्याजोक्ति - वक्रोक्तिस्वभावोक्तिभाविकोदात्तेषु सहृदयहृदयाह्लादि स्फुटं प्रतीयमानं नास्ति ।... —p. 245	प्रेयोरसवदूर्जस्विसमाहितभाविकेषु रसभावादिः प्रतीयते । उपमाविनोक्तिविरोधार्थान्तरन्यासविभावनोक्तनिमित्त - विशेषोक्तिविषमसमचित्राधिकान्योन्य - कारणमालैकावलीदीपकव्याघातमाला - काव्यलिङ्गानुमानयथासंख्यार्थापत्तिसार - पर्यायपरिवृत्तिसमुच्चयपरिसंख्याविकल्प - समाधिप्रत्यनीकविशेषमीलनसामान्या - सङ्गतितद्गुणातद्गुणव्याजोक्तिप्रतीप - वक्रोक्तिस्वभावोक्तिभाविकोदात्तेषु विपश्चिच्चेतोरञ्जनं स्फुटं प्रतीयमानं न विद्यते । —p. 52

[31] Cf. *Pratāparudra-yaśobhūṣaṇa* (Bālamanoramā Edition), p. 252.

2. *definition of Upamā.*	
स्वत : सिद्धेन भिन्नेन संमतेन च धर्मतः । साम्यमन्येन वर्ण्यस्य वाच्यं चेदेकदोपमा ॥ —p. 254.	वर्ण्यस्य साम्यमन्येन स्वतः सिद्धेन धर्मतः । भिन्नेन सूर्यभीष्टेन वाच्यं यत्रोपमैकदा ॥ —p. 54
3. *example of absence of nyūnopamā:*	
उदन्वानिव गम्भीरः सुवर्णाद्रिरिवोन्नतः । दिङ्महेभ इव क्षोणीधौरेयः काकतीश्वरः॥	समुद्र इव गम्भीर : सुमेरुरिव सून्नतः । दिग्दन्तीव च षट्खण्डधौरेयो भरतेश्वरः॥ —p. 55
4. *definition of śayyā:*	
या पदानां परान्योन्यमैत्री शय्येति कथ्यते —p. 49	पदानुगुण्यरूपा या मैत्री शय्येति कथ्यते । —p. 116
5. *definition of drākṣāpāka:*	
द्राक्षापाकः स कथितो बहिरन्तः स्फुरद्रसः । —p. 49	द्राक्षापाक : स भण्येत बाह्याभ्यन्तः स्फुरद्रस :: —p. 117
6. *example of ajahallakṣaṇā:*	
पत्युः काकतिनाथस्य पादपीठीमनारतम् । स्फुरद्रत्नप्रभाजालैरलङ्कुर्वन्ति मौलय : ॥ —p. 36	पुरोः समवसृत्यन्तराश्रितं सिंहविष्टरम् । अलंचक्रुः किरीटानि नानारत्नमरी- चिभिः ॥ ॥ —pp. 119-120

What is still more clinching is the fact that at least one verse is quoted by Ajitasena—and that no less than three times[32]—from Arhaddāsa's *Munisuvratakāvya,* also known as *Kāvyaratna*. The verse in question:

चन्द्रप्रभं नौमि यदङ्गकान्तिं ज्योत्स्नेति मत्वा द्रवतीन्दुकान्तः ।
चकोरयूथं पिबति स्फुटन्ति कृष्णोऽपि पक्षे किल कैरवाणि ॥

is the second benedictory verse of Arhaddāsa in his work already mentioned. Arhaddāsa has mentioned with respect the prolific writer Āśādhara Paṇḍita of the 13th century.

[32] *AC*, pp. 56, 69 and 89.

Since one of the latter's works is said to have been *Bharateśvarābhyudaya*, and since most of the illustrative verses in Ajitasena's work are in glorification of Bharateśa-cakrin, we may not be far from the truth in concluding that many quotations in the *Alaṁkāracintāmaṇi* may be traceable to that work, now unfortunately lost.

The following is a citation from an unnamed lexicon which we find in the *Alaṁkāracintāmaṇi:*—

अकारो ब्रह्मविष्ण्वीशकमठेष्वगणे रणे ।
गौरवेऽन्तःपुरे हेतौ भूषणेऽङ्घ्रावुमेज्ययोः ॥[33]

It is traceable as the first verse in the *ekākṣara-kāṇḍa* of Irugapa Daṇḍanātha's *Nānārtharatnamālā*.[34] This Irugapa was a protégé of the Vijayanagar ruler Harihara, who ruled between 1379 and 1406. We are thus forced to conclude that the present Ajitasena could not have composed his work much earlier than 1421 A.D., the date perhaps of one of the Mss. of *Alaṁkāracintāmaṇi*. It would appear that if the said date of the Ms. is correct, it should have been copied in the author's own lifetime.

VIII

There is no doubt, however, regarding the mother-tongue of our author Ajitasena. It was definitely Kannada, since he gives an interesting line of verse which is pure Kannada, while illustrating *Saṁskṛta-Karṇāṭa-jāti*, or passage which can yield meanings in both the languages, Sanskrit and Kannada. The passage is:

जहाति कीदृशी कान्तं वधूः, सम्बुध्यतां रिपुः ।
एनेंदु करेवं नाथं कान्तेयं संबुभुक्षेंयि ॥[35]

[33] *AC*, p. 50.

[34] Deccan College Publication, Ed. B. R. Sharma.

[35] In the Kannada line vowels in नें, रे, ते, क्षे are pronounced short.

There are three questions in this verse, the first two in Sanskrit and the third in Kannada. The answer to all the questions is furnished in *nīratāre* which makes sense in Sanskrit *(nīratā+are)* as well as in Kannada *(nīra tāre*= 'fetch me water').

Conclusions

1. Ajitasena, not Jinasena, was the author of the *Alaṁkāra-cintāmaṇi.*
2. This Ajitasena cannot be identical with the famous pontiff of the tenth century A.D.
3. He should be distinguished also from the author of *Cintāmaṇiprakāśa*, and might have been the author of Śṛṅgāra-mañjarī also.
4. He hailed from Karṇāṭaka.
5. The work *Alaṁkāracintāmaṇi* belongs to the class of *Yaśobhūṣaṇas* in *Alaṁkāraśāstra* which became popular in South India after Vidyādhara's *Ekāvalī* and Vidyānātha's *Pratāparudrayaśobhūṣaṇa.*
6. It is perhaps as late as 1420 A.D. The large number of *Alaṁkāras* treated—about 70 in all—also confirms this conclusion.

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